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# UNIVERSAL HISTORY,

FROM THE

## CREATION OF THE WORLD

TO THE

## BEGINNING OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

BY THE LATE

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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BOSTON:
HILLIARD, GRAY, AND COMPANY.

MDCCCXXXVII.

# ADVERTISEMENT.

This work on Universal History comprehends the whole course of Lectures on that subject delivered by the Author, while Professor of Civil History and Greek and Roman Antiquities in the University of Edinburgh. The work entitled Elements of History, by the same author, was, originally, merely the heads or outlines of this course of lectures. It was afterwards enlarged so as to form a Syllabus to the general reader of history ; and has been so favorably received by the public as to go through numerous editions in this country, and also in America ; and to have been adopted as a manual in not a few Universities.

The complete work is now, for the first time, given to the public. The preparation of it for the press was the last of the literary labors of its distinguished Author. Nor did he live to complete it ; but the constant attention of thirty years, and its annual revision during the greater part of that period, had left little to its Editor. W. F. T.

London, January, 1834.

STEREOTYPED BY T. G. WELLS & CO.
BOSTON.

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# UNIVERSAL HISTORY.

## BOOK THE FIRST.

### CHAPTER I.

Various plans of lectures—Chronological method—Method of treating history as subservient only to the science of politics—Plan of the present work—Division by epochs rejected, and why—a predominant nation always the principal object—Ancient history—Greece—Collateral objects, Egypt, Phœnicia, &c.—Views of government, science, arts, &c.—Rome, its collateral and [illegible] of history—Decline of the empire—Gothic nations—Modern history—Saracens—Charlemagne—Laws, &c. of that age—Britain—Continental European kingdoms—Crusades—Russia, Switzerland—Fall of Eastern empire—Moors—Portuguese discoveries—The Reformation—Asia—India—Revolt of the Netherlands—Age of Henry IV. and Elizabeth—Revolution and close of British history—Spain—France—Sweden—Age of Louis XIV.—Charles XII.—Peter the Great—Conclusion—Progress of Science and Literature in Europe.

Ingenious men, whose department in the course of education, both in the foreign universities and in our own, was the science of universal history, have followed different methods or plans of historical prelections. In some of the universities of the Continent, the Epitome of Turselline has been used as a text-book, on which the lectures of the professor were an extended commentary, giving considerable amplitude, and consequently illustration, to what is little more than a dry, though a very perspicuous chronicle of events, from the creation of the world to the end of the seventeenth century. Such were the lectures of Peter Burman, who for many years sustained a high reputation as Professor of History at Utrecht; and such were likewise the prelections of Professor Mackie, in the University of Edinburgh. They were composed in the Latin language, which, down to the middle of the 18th century, was the universal vehicle of academical instruction; an institution which, although attended with one important benefit, namely, the support and diffusion of classical learning, has perhaps been wisely laid aside as unfavorable to the ample and copious illustration of a

science which cannot easily be given but in the vernacular tongue. The lectures on the Epitome of Turselline, which I have mentioned, were, therefore, as might be expected, little more than a dry narration of facts. If, in order to derive proofs from history, nothing more were necessary than that the memory should be stored with all the remarkable events that have occurred from the Creation to the present time, properly arranged in the order in which they happened, there could be no better book than the Epitome of Turselline, or the more enlarged *Rationarium* of Petavius. But books of this kind, and illustrations of such authors, when they are nothing more than amplifications of their text, have neither the charms of history nor its utility. As they contain no display of character, nor any spirit of reflection, they are incapable of either exciting the feelings, arresting the curiosity, or stimulating the powers of the understanding: and without these qualities, they want even the power of impressing the memory; for where the attention is not vigorously kept awake, either by the excitement of some passion, or the stimulus of a rational curiosity, exercised in developing the springs and consequences of events, we listen with indifference even to the most orderly and perspicuous narration, and no durable impression is made upon the mind.

Aware of these obvious consequences, and sensible that historical prelections on a plan of this kind were inadequate to the purpose of conveying useful knowledge or improvement, some professors, of acknowledged abilities, have in the instruction of their pupils pursued a method entirely opposite. They have considered history in no other light than as furnishing documents and proofs illustrative of the science of politics and the law of nations. In this view, laying down a regular system of political science, their historical lectures were no other than dissertations on the several heads or titles of public law, illustrated by examples drawn from ancient and modern history.

By this latter method, it is not to be denied that much useful knowledge may be communicated; and where the professed object is the study of politics, or that instruction which is commonly termed *diplomatic*, it is the proper plan to be pursued. But the study of history, and that of politics, though closely allied to each other, and kindred sciences, are still different branches of mental discipline; the one preparatory and subservient to the other. The student of politics or public law is presumed to have that previous acquaintance with history which it is the object of a course of historical study to communicate; and without such acquaintance his study of politics will be altogether idle and fruitless. A little reflection will suffice to convince us that it is not possible, in the most ample and judicious course of lectures on history, to convey such a knowledge of political economy as may be communicated in a course of prelections on that science; for this plain reason, that in lectures on history, politics cannot be treated as a regular

and connected system. But much less is it possible in a course of prelections on political economy to communicate to the student a sufficient knowledge of history: for in such prelections, history must lose all connection whatever, and become nothing else than a magazine of facts, taken at random from the annals of all different nations, without regard to time or the order of events, but selected merely as they happen to furnish a convenient illustration. In this way, we see but imperfectly that chain which joins effects to their causes; we lose all view of the gradual progress of manners, the advancement of man from barbarism to civilization, and thence to refinement and corruption; we see nothing of the connection of states and empires, or the mutual influence which they have upon each other; above all, we lose entirely the best benefit of history, its utility as a school of morals.

As the two plans I have mentioned are in a manner opposite extremes—the one possessing nothing but method, without any reflection; the other a great deal of reflection, but without method—it has been my endeavor, in the following Commentaries on Universal History, to steer a middle course, and by endeavoring to remedy the imperfection of either method, to unite, if possible, the advantages of both.

While, therefore, so much regard is paid to the chronological order of events as is necessary for exhibiting the progress of mankind in society, and communicating just views of the state of the world in all the different ages to which authentic history extends, I shall, in the delineation of the rise and fall of empires, and the revolutions of states, pay more attention to the connection of *subject* than that of *time*.

In this view, I shall reject entirely the common method of arranging general history according to certain epochs or eras; and this, as I conceive, upon sufficient grounds. The arguments commonly used for this method of arrangement are, 1. The great help it affords to the memory for fixing the chronological dates of remarkable events in the history of any particular nation; and 2. The assistance which these epochs give to the mind, towards forming distinct ideas of all that is passing at the same period of time through all the different states or kingdoms. The first of these arguments supposes the epochs to be taken chiefly from the history of a single nation; as those of the Bishop of Meaux (M. Bossuet) in his *Discours sur l' Histoire Universelle*, an admirable work of its peculiar kind, and which justly maintains a great reputation. In this luminous epitome, the history of all the different states and kingdoms is arranged according to some remarkable events taken, for the greatest part, from the *History of the Jews*. The second argument supposes the epochs taken from the history of different nations, and to be such remarkable events as had a general influence on mankind, or an effect upon the state of society, over a considerable portion of the globe. Such are the epochs

assumed by M. Mehegan in his *Tableau de l' Histoire Universelle*; or those of the *Abbé Millot*, in his *Elémens de l' Histoire Générale*.

With regard to the former of these methods, namely, that of M. Bossuet, there can be no doubt, that by calling the attention particularly to a few great and striking events in the history of any nation, the precise date of these great events may be very easily impressed upon the memory. They serve as great landmarks, and the mind easily recollects their place and the time of their erection; but this is nearly all the benefit we derive from them. They afford no help towards fixing the dates, or even the order and succession of the intermediate events, many of which may be highly important, and equally deserving of remembrance as the epoch itself. Nay, there is even a probability that the recollection of those epochs may tend to confound the chronological order of the intermediate events, by referring them all to one common era which alone is fixed upon the memory: But, to remember the order and regular succession of events, is all that is of use or importance in chronological history. It is a matter of small importance to record in the mind the precise date of any remarkable fact as it stands in a table of chronology. If actions and events preserve in the mind their due series and relation to each other, a critical accuracy with respect to the years of the Julian period in which they happened, or the precise Olympiad, is mere useless pedantry.

The history of the Jews is of the greatest importance, as being the venerable basis of the Christain religion. It is therefore deserving of the most profound and attentive study. But the Jews, during the chief periods of their history, were a small and sequestered people, whose annals record only their connections, or their hostile differences with the petty tribes which surrounded them, or the nations in their immediate neighborhood. It was therefore injudicious in M. Bossuet, whose object was to exhibit a view of universal history, to make this nation the great and prominent group in his painting of the world, to which all the other parts of his extensive picture were subordinate. In the selection of many of his epochs—as for instance, the Calling of Abraham, the Promulgation of the Law by Moses, and the Building of Solomon's Temple—he affords us no assistance in the arrangement of events in the great empires of antiquity, with which the Jews in those remote periods had no connection.

The epochs of Mehegan and of Millot, if considered only as sections or divisions of the subject, are chosen with sufficient propriety. Thus the Roman history is divided by Millot into several epochs, as the Kings—the Consuls—the Tribunes of the People—the Decemvirs—Rome taken by the Gauls—the war with Pyrrhus, &c. Such an arrangement is well adapted to the history of a single nation, and it may afford some little aid to the recollec-

tion of intermediate events in the annals of that nation: but where the object is a delineation of general history, or of all that is passing in the world at the same period of time, this method has not the same advantage. Thus, for example, in the *Tableau de l'Histoire Moderne* of Mehegan, the seventh epoch is Christopher Columbus, 1492, being the date of his discovery of America. The next epoch is the peace of Westphalia, between France, Sweden, and the Empire, in 1648. Supposing these epochs to be easily remembered, it may be asked what help they afford towards the recollection of the dates of any of the intermediate events in this interval of one hundred and fifty-six years, or of the order in which they succeeded each other. Yet some of these were among the most remarkable that have occurred in the annals of the world; for instance, the Reformation in Germany and England—the Revolt of the Netherlands, and the Establishment of the Republic of the United Provinces—the Edict of Nantes, giving toleration to the Protestants in France—the Expulsion of the Moors from Spain. The recollection that the discovery of America happened in 1492, affords no help to the remembrance of the time of the Reformation, nor tends to fix in the memory whether the expulsion of the Moors preceded or followed the revolution of the Netherlands. The classing of these unconnected events under one general epoch, tends only to a confused reference of them all to one date, although, between them, there was almost a century of difference of time.

Besides, in every method of classification, there ought to be a relation between the objects classified, which the mind at once perceives, so that the idea of the one naturally leads to or suggests that of the other. Now such connection it is evident there cannot be in such an arrangement, where the events happening in a certain period of time over the whole globe, are all referred to one event that happened in the first year of that period, in one particular nation.

The division of Universal History into epochs, goes upon this idea, that a comprehensive picture is to be presented to the view of all the remarkable events and actions which were going forward upon the face of the earth at the same period of time. Now, a picture of this kind, if equal justice is done to every part of it, would present a most confused and uninstructive composition. In order to preserve the strict chronological order, many of the most important public events which are progressive, and of considerable duration, must be interrupted, almost in their commencement, or in the middle of their progress; and the attention carried off to an infinite variety of different objects and scenes, totally unconnected with each other. Thus, M. Bossuet makes no scruple to transport his reader in a single sentence from Jerusalem to Lacedæmon, from the atrocities of Jehu in exterminating the royal house of Judah, and the criminal usurpation of Athaliah, to the foundation

of the Spartan republic, and the politic plans of Lycurgus; and, with equal impropriety, he hurries back the reader in the next sentence to the conclusion of the history of Athaliah, the punishment of her crimes, and the restoration of Joas, king of Judah, to the throne of his ancestors.

But what are the advantages of this strict chronological order, that we must sacrifice so much to it? Order is beautiful, but it is no otherwise so than as subservient to utility; and a whimsical order confounds, instead of elucidating. We certainly make a bad exchange, if we lose all ideas of a connected history of any single nation, and all the important lessons which arise from remarking the progress of events, and the chain which links them with their causes, for the sake of a forced association of events happening in distant nations, which have no other connection than that of time.

I shall now briefly lay down that plan which I propose to follow in these Commentaries on Universal History.

When the world is viewed at any period, either of ancient or of modern history, we generally observe one nation or empire predominant, to whom all the rest bear, as it were, an underpart, and to whose history we find, in general, that the principal events in other nations may be referred from some natural connection.

This predominant nation I propose to exhibit to view as the principal object, whose history, as being in reality the most important, is therefore to be more fully delineated; while the rest, as subordinate, are brought into view only when they come to have an obvious connection with the principal. The antecedent history of such subordinate nations will then be traced in a short retrospect of their own annals. Such collateral views, which figure only as episodes, I shall endeavor so to regulate, as that they shall have no hurtful effect in violating the unity of the principal piece.

For the earliest periods of the history of the world, we have no records of equal authority with the Sacred Scriptures. They ascend to a period antecedent to the formation of regular states or communities, they are long prior to the authentic annals of the profane nations,* and they are, therefore, our only lights on those distant and dark ages of the infancy of the human race.

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* Moses conducted the Israelites out of Egypt 1491 years before the birth of Christ, according to the Chronology of Usher. Sanchoniatho, supposed the most ancient of the profane writers, lived several years after the Trojan war (B. C. 1184,) and the fragments which pass under his name are of the most doubtful authority. They were compiled, as Philo of Byblos informs us, from certain ancient Ammonian records, which, amidst a great mass of fabulous and allegorical matter, contained, as was supposed, some historical facts, which Sanchoniatho has extracted. Homer lived, as is believed, about a century later than Sanchoniatho. Cadmus of Miletus, the first prose historian among the profane writers, flourished under Cyrus, about 540 years before Christ.

Among the profane nations of antiquity, that which first makes a remarkable figure, and whose history at the same time has a claim to be regarded as authentic, is the states of Greece. They therefore demand a peculiar attention, and it is of importance to trace their history to its origin. But the Greeks were indebted for the greatest part of their knowledge to the Egyptians and Phœnicians. These, therefore, as relative to the leading nation, demand a portion of our attention, and naturally precede, or pave the way to, the history of the Greeks. For a similar reason, the Assyrians, a rival nation, conquered by the Egyptians at one time, and conquerors of them at others in their turn, though their early history is extremely dark and uncertain, require likewise a share in our observation.

The Greeks then come to fill up the whole of the picture, and we endeavor to present an accurate delineation of their independent states, the singular constitution of the two great republics of Sparta and Athens, and the outlines of their history, down to the period of the Persian war, commenced by Darius, the son of Hystaspes, and prosecuted under his successors Xerxes and Artaxerxes. This connection naturally induces a short retrospect to the preceding periods of the Persian history; the rise of that monarchy, the nature of its government, the manners of the people, and the singular religion of the ancient Persians, which subsisted without much adulteration for some thousands of years, and is still kept alive among a particular sect at this day.

The conclusion of the Persian war brings us back to the internal history of the states of Greece. We observe the subjection of Athens to the ambitious Pericles, and the seeds sown of the decline of that illustrious republic. The divisions of Greece engage our attention; the war of Peloponnesus; the corruption of the Spartan constitution introduced by Lysander; the glory of Thebes under Pelopidas and Epaminondas. We consider now the ambitious schemes of Philip of Macedon, the renewal of the war with Persia, and the immense conquests of Alexander the Great. We see, in fine, the total corruption of the Greeks; the extinction of all public virtue; the last feeble remains of patriotism in the union of the Achæan states; and the final reduction and submission of Greece to the arms of the Romans.

The history of this illustrious people, the Greeks, furnishes a most ample field of reflection. The policy and constitution of the different states, particularly the two great and rival republics of Athens and Lacedæmon, demand our attention, as singularly illustrative of ancient manners, and the wonderful effects of habit and discipline on the nature of man. The causes which contributed to the rise and decline of those commonwealths are pregnant with political instruction. The change which the national character of the Greeks in general underwent, is a striking circumstance in the history of human nature, and will illustrate the influence of morals

on political prosperity. The literary genius of this people, their progress in philosophy, their eminence in the fine arts—in all of which departments they became the models of imitation and the instructers of the ancient world,—these subjects, furnishing much matter of useful speculation, will be treated in separate short disquisitions at the conclusion of the historical detail.

Hitherto the leading object of attention is the history of Greece, to which, as may be observed, may be referred, by a natural connection, that of all the other nations whose history is in those periods deserving of our acquaintance.

The conquest of Greece by the Romans entitles this latter nation to rank as the principal object in the subsequent delineation of ancient history. Without regard to the offence against chronology, we now return back above four hundred years, to observe the origin and rise of this remarkable people. We contemplate them in their infancy; we observe the military character which they derived from their incessant wars with the neighbouring states of Italy; the nature of their government and internal policy under the kings; the easy revolution effected by the substitution of the consular for the regal dignity, without any substantial change in the constitution. We next remark the causes of the subsequent change; the people uniting themselves to resist the tyranny and oppression of the patrician order; the advantages they gain by the creation of the popular magistrates; the continual encroachments they make on the powers and privileges of the higher order, till they obtain an equal capacity of enjoying all the offices and dignities of the commonwealth.

We now view the gradual extension of the Roman arms; the conquest of all Italy; the origin of the wars with foreign nations; the progress of the Punic wars, which open a collateral view of the history of Carthage and of Sicily; we trace the success of the Roman arms in Asia, Macedonia, and Greece, the opulence of the republic, from her conquests; and the corruption of her manners. In fine, we behold the extinction of patriotism; the endless discords between the orders, loosening all the bands of public virtue; the progress of faction and inordinate ambition, terminating in the civil wars and ruin of the commonwealth.

At this remarkable period, which naturally allows a pause in the historical detail, I shall devote some time to the examination of those particulars which are characteristic of the genius and national spirit of the Romans; their system of education; their laws; their literary character; their art of war; their knowledge in the arts and sciences; their private and public manners; and their predominant tastes and passions. I shall close the remarks on the Roman history during the commonwealth, with some political reflections naturally arising from the subject, and illustrated by examples drawn both from that history, and from the preceding account of the states of Greece.

We then resume the outlines of the Roman history under the emperors. We observe the specious policy under which they disguise an absolute authority, till it is no longer necessary to keep on the mask. We remark the decline of the ambitious character of the Romans, and their easy submission to the entire loss of civil liberty; the progress of corruption; the venality of the imperial dignity; the mischievous though necessary policy of the emperors, who, to secure their own power, unfortunately abused the military spirit of the people; the effect of this ruinous policy in inviting the barbarous nations to attack the frontiers of those extensive dominions, which were now a languid and unwieldy body without internal vigor; the weakness of the empire still farther increased by its partition under Diocletian, and subdivision under his successors; the triumph of Christianity, and the extinction of paganism in the age of Theodosius.

We mark now the progress of the barbarian nations, who attack the provinces on every quarter, till the Western empire becomes entirely their prey; Africa seized by the Vandals, Spain by the Visigoths, Gaul by the Franks, Britain by the Saxons; Rome and Italy itself by the Heruleans, and afterwards by the Ostrogoths. We shall then observe, as the last flashes of an expiring lamp, a short but vigorous exertion from the East, by the generals of Justinian; the temporary recovery of Italy; and its final reduction by the Lombards.

At this period, of the fall of the Western empire, we are naturally invited to enter into some short inquiries regarding the manners, the genius, the laws, and government of the Gothic nations; and the distinguishing characteristics of those northern invaders, both before and after their establishment in the provinces of the empire.

Thus, Ancient History will admit of a perspicuous delineation, by making our principal object of attention the predominant states of Greece and Rome, and incidentally touching on the most remarkable parts of the history of the subordinate nations of antiquity, when connected with, or relative to, the principal object.

In the delineation of Modern History, a similar plan will be pursued. The leading objects will be more various, and will more frequently change their place: a nation at one time the principal, may become for awhile subordinate, and afterwards reassume its rank as principal; but uniformity of design will still characterize this moving picture; the attention will always be directed to the history of a predominant people; and other nations will be only incidentally noticed, when there is a natural connection with the principal object.

After the fall of the Western empire, the nation which first distinguishes itself by its conquests, and the splendor of its dominion, is that of the Saracens. The progress of the arms and of the religion of Mahomet, the rise and extent of the empire of the

caliphs, are singular and interesting objects of attention. The Franks, though settled in Gaul before this period, do not attract our notice till afterwards—when the foundation of the new empire of the west by Charlemagne naturally engages us to look back to the origin of their monarchy. Thus we have briefly before us, in one connected view, the progress of this remarkable people from their infancy under Clovis, to their highest elevation under Charlemagne; and thence to the reduction and dismemberment of their dominions under his weak posterity.

The age of Charlemagne furnishes some interesting matters of inquiry with regard to laws, literature, manners, and government; and we shall endeavor to trace the origin of that remarkable policy, the source (as has been justly said) both of the stability and of the disorders of the kingdoms of Europe.—the feudal system.

The collateral objects of attention during this period are, the still venerable remains of the Roman empire in the East; the beginning of the conquests and establishments of the Normans; the foundation and progress of the temporal dominion of the church of Rome; the separation of the Greek and Latin churches; the affairs of Italy, and the conquest of Spain by the Saracens.

We now direct our attention for the first time to the history of Britain, postponed to this period, that we may consider it in one connected view, from its rudest stage to the end of the Anglo-Saxon government.

As the history of our own country is of more importance to us than that of any other, the British history, as often as it is resumed, will be treated with greater amplitude than the limits of our plan allow to other nations; and while we note the progress of manners, literature, and the arts, it shall be our endeavor, without prejudice, to mark those circumstances which indicate the progress of the constitution, its successive changes, and its advancement to that system of equal liberty under which we have the happiness of living. We shall see in the Saxon *Wittenagemot* the rude model of a parliament; and in the institutions of the English Alfred, we shall admire, in an age of barbarism, the genius of a great politician and legislator.

While the history of Britain to the Conquest is the primary object of attention, a collateral view is taken of the state of the continental kingdoms of Europe. France, under the first sovereigns of the Capetian race, presents us with very little that is worthy of observation. The Normans carry their arms into Italy, and achieve the conquest of Sicily; while the maritime states of Venice and Genoa, rising into consequence, become the commercial agents of most of the European kingdoms. The dissensions between the German emperors and the popes, and the gradual increase of the temporal authority of the see of Rome, are not unworthy of a particular attention.

The British history is again resumed as a principal object; and

we pursue its great outlines from the Norman conquest to the death of King John. In the tyranny of William the Conqueror, and in the exorbitant weight of the crown during the reigns immediately succeeding, we shall observe the causes of that spirit of union among the people, in their efforts to resist it, which procured for them those valuable charters, the foundation of our civil liberty. Under the reign of the second Henry, we shall observe a most important accession of territory to the English crown, in the acquisition of the ancient and early civilized kingdom of Ireland.

At this period, the whole of the nations of Europe, as if actuated by one spirit, join in the Crusades, a series of fatal and desperate enterprises, but which form an important object of attention, from their effects in the formation of new kingdoms, new political arrangements, and a new system of manners. We shall trace with some care those effects in the changes of territorial property in the feudal governments—in the immunities acquired by towns and boroughs, which had hitherto been tied down by a species of vassalage to the nobles—and in the aggrandizement of the maritime cities. The moral as well as the political effects of those enterprises must be particularly noticed; and we shall find a subject of entertaining disquisition in tracing the origin of chivalry, and its consequences in the introduction of romantic fiction.

A short connected sketch of the European kingdoms, after the crusades, naturally follows; in which a variety of interesting subjects solicit our attention:—the rise of the House of Austria; the decline of the feudal government in France by the introduction of the *Third Estate* to the national assemblies; the establishment of the Swiss republics; the disorders in the popedom; and the memorable transactions in the council of Constance.

These shortly considered, Britain again resumes her place as the leading object of attention. We remark the progress of the English constitution under Henry III., when the deputies of the boroughs were first admitted into parliament, the real date of the origin of the House of Commons: the strengthening of the liberties of the people under Edward I. whose military enterprises, the conquest of Wales, and the temporary reduction of Scotland, lead us, by an easy connection, to the history of the latter kingdom. We shall here behold the many noble and successful struggles made by that ancient nation for her freedom and independence, against the power of the three first Edwards. We consider the claim of right preferred by Edward III. to the crown of France, equally ill-founded, but more ably and gloriously sustained: and the multiplied triumphs of the arms of England, till the kingdom of France itself is won by Henry V.

We now turn our attention to the East, to remark an interesting spectacle: the progress of the Ottoman arms retarded for a while by the conquests of Tamerlane and Scanderbeg; but pros-

cuted under Mahomet the Great, to the total extinction of the Greek or Constantinopolitan empire. The manners, laws, and government of the Turks, merit a share of our consideration.

Returning westward, we see France in this age emancipating herself from the feudal bondage; and the consequences of the pretensions made by her sovereigns to a part of Italy. These pretensions, opposed by Ferdinand of Spain, naturally call our attention to that quarter, where a most important political change had been operated in the union of the sovereignties of Arragon and Castile, and the fall of the Moorish kingdom of Granada.

Returning to Britain, while England is embroiled with the civil wars of York and Lancaster, we pursue the great outlines of her history down to the reign of Henry VIII., and the cotemporary history of Scotland, during the reigns of the five Jameses. At this period, presenting a short delineation of the ancient constitution of the Scottish government, I shall endeavor to point out those political principles which regulated the conduct of the Scots with respect to their neighbors of England, and to foreign nations.

The close of the fifteenth century is a most important era in modern history. The signal improvement of navigation by the Portuguese, who opened to Europe the commerce of the Indies—the rapid advancement of literature from the discovery of the art of printing—and the revival of the fine arts—present a most extensive field of pleasing and instructive speculation. We shall mark the effect of the Portuguese discoveries in awakening the spirit of enterprise, together with the industry, of all the European nations; and shall here introduce a progressive account of the *commerce of Europe* down to this era, when it was vigorously and extensively promoted. We shall in like manner exhibit a view of the progress of *European literature* through the preceding ages of comparative barbarism, to the splendor it attained at this remarkable period. The consideration of the progress of *the fine arts* we postpone to the succeeding age of Leo X., when they attained to their utmost perfection.

After a short survey of the northern states of Europe, which is necessary for preserving the unity of the picture, the capital object of attention is the aggrandizement of the House of Austria, under Charles V.; intimately connected with the history of France under Francis I.; and incidentally with that of England, under Henry VIII.: a period meriting particular and attentive consideration from two events of the utmost moral and political importance—the reformation of religion in Germany and England, and the discovery of America. On this period is likewise thrown an additional lustre from the splendor of the fine arts in Italy.

After bestowing on these varied and interesting subjects the attention which they merit, the state of Asia, which, from the period of ancient history, had attracted occasionally only a slight

degree of notice, becomes for awhile a principal object of attention. The empire of India, highly important in modern times, the singularity of its political arrangements and national character, which have suffered no change since the age of Alexander; the political and moral history of the Persians; the revolutions operated on that ancient continent by the Tartar successors of Gengis-Khan, are all worthy of a particular share of our consideration. The establishment of the Tartar princes on the throne of China calls our attention to that extraordinary monarchy, which, till this period, was almost unknown to the nations of Europe. We shall here examine at some length the ground of those opinions which it has of late become customary to entertain, with regard to the prodigious antiquity of this people, their wonderful attainments in the arts and sciences: their alleged early acquaintance with the chief modern discoveries of the Europeans: and the boasted excellence of their laws, their government, and political economy.

Returning to Europe, the object which, in the close of the sixteenth century, first demands our notice, is the reign of Philip II. of Spain, distinguished by the revolt of the Netherlands, and the establishment of the republic of Holland. The constitution and government of the United Provinces merit here a brief delineation.

France now takes her turn, and holds the principal place in the picture during the turbulent and distracted reign of Francis II., Charles IX., and Henry III., till we witness her happiness, tranquillity, and splendor under the great Henry IV.

The transition thence is easy to the era of England's grandeur and prosperity under his contemporary Elizabeth. The affairs of Scotland, too much connected at this period with those of the sister country, call our attention to the interesting reign of Mary, Queen of Scots, and the progress of the Reformation in that kingdom. Hence we pursue, without interruption, the outlines of the English history during the reigns of James I., of Charles I.—during the Commonwealth—and the subsequent reigns of Charles II. and James II.—to the important period of the Revolution.

Here, after a connected sketch of the progress of the English constitution, and a particular examination of its nature at this great era, when it became fixed and determined, we close our delineation of the British History.

But the affairs of the continent of Europe, at this time in a most active and progressive state, admit not of the same termination. We look back to France, which, under the splendid and politic administration of Richelieu, yet embroiled with faction and civil war, presents a striking object of attention. We remark the declension of the power of Spain under Philip III. and Philip IV., and Portugal in the latter reign shaking off its yoke, and establishing an independent monarchy. We see the Austrian power attacked by the Swedes under Gustavus Adolphus, declining under Ferdinand II. and III., and humiliated by the peace of Westphalia, in which

the French and Swedes gave laws to the empire; a treaty, however, salutary in the main, as settling the ruinous quarrels between her contending princes.

We see France, in the minority of Louis XIV., harassed with the disorders of the Fronde, originating in the unpopular administration of Mazarin. After his death, we remark the genius of Louis displaying itself in a variety of splendid enterprises; his views seconded by the abilities of his ministers and generals; while the excellent order of the finances enables him easily to execute the most important designs. The opening to the succession of the Spanish crown, while it increases for awhile the glory of his arms, leads finally to the mortifying reverse of his fortune; and we behold the latter years of this memorable reign as unfortunate, as the former had been marked with splendor and success.

Meantime, two rival powers of high celebrity call our attention to a variety of interesting scenes in the North of Europe. Russia, till now in absolute barbarism, becomes at once, by the abilities of a single man, a powerful and polished empire. Sweden, under the minority of its prince, ready to be torn in pieces by the powers of Russia, Denmark, and Poland, becomes, in a single campaign, the terror of the surrounding kingdoms. We see this prince, a second Alexander, in a career as short and as impetuous, carry those heroic virtues which he possessed to an extreme as dangerous as their opposite vices.

At this period we close our delineation of modern history, with a view of the progress of the sciences, and of the state of literature in Europe, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Such is the plan to be pursued in the following Commentaries. Of the merits or defects of the arrangement, those who possess an extensive knowledge of history, and who have prosecuted that study to its best purposes,—instruction in political and moral science,—are best fitted to form a judgment. To the general reader, I trust it will at least be found to possess the qualities of simplicity and perspicuity.

With regard to chronology, it is necessary to remark that, without entering into any discussion of the merits of the different systems, I have chosen to follow the chronology of Archbishop Usher, or that which is founded on the Hebrew text of the Sacred Writings; and this for the sole reason, that it has been most generally adopted by the writers both of our own and of foreign nations.

A chronological table is subjoined to the work, because a frequent reference to dates gives a disagreeable interruption to the chain of narration; and the succession of events in the mere order of time, as well as the cotemporary history of the different nations of the world, is better understood from a single glance on the page of a table of chronology than from repeated notices in the course of the narrative.

# CHAPTER II.

Earliest Ages of the World—Early History of Assyria—Of Egypt—Invasion of the Shepherd Kings.

PROFANE History, agreeing with sacred, joins in the establishment of this great truth, which reason itself, independently of authority, must have clearly evinced, that this visible system of things which we term the Universe has had its commencement.

All accounts of the early history of single nations trace them back to a state of rudeness and barbarism, which argues a new and an infant establishment; and we must conclude that to be true with respect to the whole, which we find to be true with respect to all its parts. But to delineate the characters of this early state of society, to trace distinctly the steps by which population extended over the whole surface of the habitable globe; the separation of mankind into tribes and nations; the causes which led to the formation of the first kingdoms, and the precise times when they were formed—are matters of inquiry for which neither sacred nor profane history affords us that amplitude of information which is necessary for giving clear and positive ideas. But while we travel through those remote periods of the history of an infant world, making the best of those lights we can procure, we have the comfort of thinking that, in proportion as man advances from barbarism to civilization, in proportion as his history becomes useful or instructive, its certainty increases, and its materials become more authentic and more abundant.

The Hebrew text of the sacred writings informs us that a period of 1656 years elapsed between the Creation of the world and the Deluge. The Books of Moses contain a brief detail of the transactions of that period, and are the only records of those ages. With regard to the state of the antediluvian world, speculative men have exercised their fancy in numberless conjectures. Various notions have been formed concerning the population of this globe and its physical appearance—probable causes conjectured of the longevity of its inhabitants—inquiries into the state of the arts—and theories framed of that process of nature by which the Almighty Being is supposed to have brought about the universal deluge. These are, no doubt, ingenious and interesting speculations; but they can scarcely be said to fall within the department of history, of which it is the province to instruct by ascer-

tained facts, and not to amuse by fanciful theories. To us, who wish to derive from history a knowledge of human nature as it is at present, and to study those important lessons which it furnishes for the conduct of life, it is of little consequence to know what was either the physical or the political state of the world before the deluge. As so entire a change must have been caused by that event on the face of nature, as totally to extinguish all traces of antediluvian knowledge, and to reduce the world anew to a state of infancy, we are well assured that the manners, customs, arts, sciences, and political arrangements of the antediluvian ages could have had little or no influence on those which succeeded them.

Of the times immediately following the deluge, we have no other original history than that contained in the Books of Moses. The sacred writings inform us, that the family of Noah established themselves in the plain of Shinaar, where they built the Tower of Babel, and that the confusion of their language caused their dispersion into the different regions of the earth.

A view of the physical surface of this habitable globe, parted, as we observe it is, by those great natural boundaries, the chains of mountains, and the rivers which intersect it, affords the most convincing evidence that the earth was intended by the great Architect of all things to be peopled by various tribes and nations, who should be perpetually separated from each other by those eternal barriers, which will ever prevent empires and states from permanently exceeding a just bound of territory. Without those natural boundaries, the limits of kingdoms must have been continually fluctuating; and perpetual discord must have embroiled the universe. An ambitious potentate may, with the accidental concurrence of favorable circumstances, enlarge for a time the limits of an empire, beyond this just proportion; but the *force* of government and laws is weakened as its sphere is extended: and the encroachment being clearly marked and defined by those natural barriers, the lost territory will scarcely fail to be regained; and the revolution of a few years will again bring empires and kingdoms to their ancient limits.

The physical nature, with respect to soil and climate, of the different countries into which the inhabitants of the earth were dispersed, must, in most cases, have determined their manner of life, and influenced the condition of society. If, before their dispersion, mankind had made any progress in the arts, as, after that event, many of those wandering tribes must, from the nature of the countries which they occupied, have betaken themselves to the pastoral life, while others subsisted solely as hunters, the arts among them being totally neglected from finding no call to their exercise; it is no wonder that we observe, soon after the deluge, the greater part of the nations in a state of barbarism, or little advanced beyond that condition. Such of the original tribes, how-

ever, as, without any distant migration, had fixed themselves in the vicinity of their primeval seats, that is, on the borders of the Mediterranean Sea, very naturally retained and cultivated those arts of which their progenitors had been in possession. Thus, Nimrod, the grandson of Ham, the son of Noah, about 150 years after the deluge, is said to have founded Babylon; and Assur, the grandson of Noah, to have built the city of Nineveh, which became the capital of the Assyrian empire: but the Mosaic writings make no more mention of Nimrod, or of Assur, or any of their successors.

Profane historians, on the other hand, make Belus the founder of Babylon, who is therefore supposed to have been the same with Nimrod. His son, Ninus, to whom those historians attribute the foundation of Nineveh, is said to have been the conqueror of India and Bactriana; and under him and his queen Semiramis, who reigned alone after his death, the Assyrian empire is supposed to have attained a very high degree of splendor. The magnificence of Babylon and of Nineveh would indeed give immense ideas of the wealth and power of Ninus and Semiramis; but it is scarcely credible that Nineveh, in the time of its founder, and Babylon, under the son of its founder, should either have been splendid in themselves, or the empire very considerable to which they belonged. It is the conjecture of other historians, that Nineveh and Babylon, till the year 590 after the deluge, were separate monarchies: that Ninus, who reigned at Nineveh, made the conquest of Babylon; and that the date of the Assyrian empire, properly so called, is to be fixed only at the union of these kingdoms. But these are discussions of more curiosity than importance, and we shall not enter into them.

From the death of Ninias, the son of Ninus, down to the revolt of the Medes under Sardanapalus, there is an interval of 800 years, in which there is an absolute void in the history of Assyria and Babylon. The names, indeed, of the supposed sovereigns during that period are preserved, but there are no traces of historical events. Even the catalogue of the names of those princes appears suspicious, from their being taken from the Greek and Persian languages; as, for example, Lamprides, Dercylus, Amyntas, Xerxes, Aramitres. This, however, is no conclusive evidence of forgery; since we know how common has been the practice of authors of translating proper names (such, at least, as have characteristic significations) from their original, into the language used by the historian.* By those who support the authenticity of this cata-

* Among the modern writers, Buchanan and the President De Thou have signally impaired the utility of their excellent histories by this most injudicious practice. It is true that the French and English terminations of proper names accord extremely ill with the harmonious flow of classical Latin composition; but this defect might in most cases be remedied by simply giving those names

logue of the Assyrian and Babylonish monarchs, the obscurity of their reigns has been attributed to the indolence, effeminacy, and debauchery in which they were plunged. This, however, is a weak supposition. It is against all moral probability that a great empire should have subsisted without a revolution for 500 years, under a series of dissolute, weak, and effeminate monarchs. That character in the prince is the parent of seditions, conspiracies, and rebellion among the people, instead of a quiet and peaceable subjection; and, accordingly, we find that the kingdom of Babylon, till then united with Assyria, shook off its yoke under the weak and dissolute Sardanapalus. If we are at all to form a conjecture of the state of the Assyrian empire during this great chasm in its history, it must be a very different one; namely, that it was governed by a series of wise, virtuous, and pacific princes, the uniform tenor of whose reigns have furnished no striking events for the mouth of tradition, or for the pen of the historian.

Besides the Assyrians, the Egyptians are the only nation of whom profane history, at this early period, makes any mention; but the commencement of their history is as uncertain as that of the Assyrians. Menes is supposed the first king in Egypt, and according to the most probable theory, which connects the sacred with the profane history, he is believed to be the same person with Misraim, the grandson of Noah, whom there are likewise very probable grounds for supposing to be the deified personage whom the Egyptians venerated under the name of Oziris. Oziris is described as the inventor of arts, and the civilizer of a great part of the world. He raised, as we are told, a prodigious army, and overran Ethiopia, Arabia, and great part of India; appeared in all the nations of Asia, and, crossing the Hellespont, continued his progress through a great part of Europe. This extraordinary man disseminated the arts, built cities, and was universally revered as a god. Returning to Egypt, he was assassinated by his brother Typhon; but his death was revenged by his sister Isis, and his apotheosis solemnly performed.

After Menes or Oziris, Egypt was governed by a succession of illustrious men, whom succeeding ages have characterized as gods and demigods. The country was then divided into four dynasties,—Thebes, Thin, Memphis, and Tanis; the inhabitants of which had made great progress in civilization and the culture of the arts, when they were thrown back into a state of comparative barbarism by the invasion of the shepherd kings, a body of marauders from Ethiopia, who made a partition of the whole country, each of the chiefs governing independently a separate province.* The do-

a Latin termination. The disguise is impenetrable where the word itself is attempted to be translated, as *Percippus* (Harry Hotspur,) *Sophocardius* (Wishart,) *Megalocephalus* (Malcolm Canmore,) &c.

* Mr. Bruce, in his History of Abyssinia, has made it extremely probable

minion of these shepherd kings is said to have subsisted for 259 years, when they were expelled by Aonosis, a prince of Upper Egypt, and forced to retreat with their adherents into the neighboring countries of Syria and Palestine. What space of time elapsed from the termination past to their dominion by the famous Sesostris, is absolutely uncertain; nor with regard to this prince, can we give any credit to those most hyperbolical accounts either of his foreign conquests or his domestic policy, and the wonderful economy of his government. Yet, though we cannot easily believe with Herodotus that the sovereign of a country which is said to have contained 27,000,000 of inhabitants, could effect an equal partition of all the lands of the empire among his subjects; nor with Diodorus Siculus, that the same prince, with an army of 600,000 men, and 27,000 armed chariots, traversed and subdued the whole continent of Asia and a great part of Europe, we may at least hold it probable that the Egyptians had a sovereign of the name of Sesostris, who distinguished himself in those rude ages, both as a conqueror and a legislator. The reverence paid to the name of Sesostris by the ancient Egyptians, and the honors done to his memory as a great benefactor of his country, sufficiently prove the reality of such a personage.

## CHAPTER III.

On the nature of the first Governments, and on the Manners and Customs, Laws, Arts, and Sciences of the early Nations.

Amidst the scanty materials of authentic history in those early ages of the world, it may afford matter of amusing as well as useful speculation, to consider what must have been the nature of the first governments; and to endeavor to discover the genius of the ancient nations from those traces of laws, manners and customs, arts and sciences, which are preserved to us, with the aid of such conjectures as are founded on a fair and just analogy.

The rudest period of society is that in which the patriarchal

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that the shepherds who invaded Egypt were a tribe from the Abyssinian coast of the Red Sea, called *Bean*, who had become acquainted with Egypt in the way of commerce, as the carriers of the Cashile merchants, and observing the weakness of the country, while they envied its wealth, subdued it, after three several invasions.—*See Bruce's Travels.*

government takes place, or where there is no other subordination known than that of the members of a family to their head or parent. But this simple form of society can be of no long duration. Dissensions arising, and the more powerful families subduing the weaker, combinations would naturally be formed to resist the encroachments of a covetous or ambitious patriarch; and an union of interests would take place as the benefits of such a compact would be felt alike for defence or for revenge, for conquest or for domestic security. But the authority of the patriarch, thus weakened in some respects by the control of a common chief, would not necessarily be extinguished or destroyed. The family would become members of a tribe or clan; but the father would still retain his authority over his children and his servants: the number of these would render his power still considerable; and the chief or king would always find it his interest to pay such deference to the principal patriarchs of his tribe, as to consult with them in all affairs which regarded the common good.*

We may, therefore, fairly presume that a limited monarchy was the earliest form of regular government among the ancient nations. The scriptures, as well as the profane historians, bear evidence to this fact. A republic is an idea too refined and too complex for a rude people to form: and despotic monarchies arise only after extensive conquests, and a great enlargement of empire.

The first monarchies must have been very weak, and their territory extremely limited. The sovereigns would be little desirous of extending them by conquest while the land supplied the wants of its inhabitants. Security is the first idea: ambition is long posterior, and takes place only when population is abundant, and increasing luxury demands increased supplies. In forming our notions of the power of the first monarchies we are apt to be misled by the word *king*, which, in modern language and according to modern ideas, is connected with an extent of territory and a proportional power. Yet the Jewish annals, the most ancient of all histories, ought to have corrected such erroneous notions. Chedarlaomer, the first who is recorded to have attempted a military expedition, was, together with three kings, his allies, defeated by the patriarch Abraham with three hundred and eighteen men of his own household. Nimrod is supposed to have been a mighty monarch. All that Moses says of him is, that he was a *mighty hunter*. The very idea of a hunter excludes the supposition of a powerful sovereign, or a great empire. It supposes, what was certainly the case, that the earth was covered with forests, the receptacles of wild beasts, and consequently very thinly inhabited. A hunter-chief, in his excursions, might, no doubt, range over the

* The President Goguet gives a very rational deduction of the origin of the first governments, and of the transition from the patriarchal subordination to the establishment of the monarchical form.—*Origin of Laws*, b. i.

extent of modern kingdoms and empires; but what was his power, and who were his subjects? The control, and even that a very limited authority, over a few hordes or families who pitched their tents in a narrow valley in the midst of deserts, or occupied, perhaps, but a portion of that valley. A single town, or more properly an encampment, was then termed *a kingdom*. There were five kings in the vale of Sodom. Joshua defeated thirty-one kings. Adonibezek, who died a little after the time of Joshua, boasted that he had defeated three score and ten kings, and mutilating their hands and feet, had made them gather their meat under his table.

In these early periods the regal dignity was, in all probability, attained by the personal talents of individuals, on account of eminent services performed to their country; and, of course, the office of king was at first elective.* The progress is natural from thence to a hereditary monarchy. The transmission of the throne to the heir of the last sovereign originated from experience of the mischiefs arising from frequent elections, and the disorders occasioned by ambitious men aspiring to that dignity. The dread of these evils, combining with the natural feeling of regard which a people entertains for the family of the man under whose government they have been happy, —the presumption that his offspring may inherit from nature, example, or education, the virtues of their father; all these circumstances would cooperate to render the kingly office hereditary: and such, therefore, we find from ancient history was the constitution of the earliest governments.

The first ideas of conquest must have proceeded from a people in the state of shepherds, like the wandering Tartars and Scythians, who, necessarily changing their territory in quest of new pastures, would often make incursions upon the fixed dominions of the cultivated countries. And such was the condition of those marauders from Ethiopia, or perhaps Abyssinia, whom we have already mentioned under the name of *shepherd kings*, as having been the conquerors of Egypt. But monarchies or empires, thus founded by the invasion of a rude and wandering people, could seldom be stable or permanent. An extensive monarchy is, therefore, a rare phenomenon not to be looked for in such a state of society. It presupposes a considerable degree of intellectual refinement, gen-

* The account which Herodotus gives of the election of the first king of the Medes is indicative of the rise of monarchy in other rude nations. The Medes, after their revolt from the Assyrians, were subject to all the disorders and miseries of anarchy. An able man, of the name of Dejoces, was extremely successful in quieting these disorders, and by degrees attained to much influence and respect among his countrymen. Oppressed with the fatigues with which this voluntary duty was attended, Dejoces betook himself to retirement. The Medes now felt the want of his authority, and, in a general assembly of the people, it was unanimously resolved to invest their benefactor with the sovereign power.—*Herod.* b. i., c. 97, *et seq.*

ral habits of order and subordination, and a regular system of laws, all which is the work of ages; nor will political regulations meet with any respect or obedience unless among a people thus refined and enlightened.—a state of society far advanced beyond the rude condition of shepherds or hunters.

Advancement from barbarism to civilization is a very slow and gradual process, because every step in that process is the result of necessity after the experience of an error, or the strong feeling of a want. These experiments, frequently repeated, show at length the necessity of certain rules and customs to be followed by the general consent of all; and these rules become in time positive enactments or laws, enforced by certain penalties, which are various in their kind and in their degree, according to the state of society at the time of their formation. Some political writers have supposed that during the infancy of society penal laws must have been exceedingly mild, from the want of necessity in government to enforce such as are severe. On the other hand, it may perhaps appear a more natural conjecture that rude and ferocious manners would incite to rigorous and cruel punishments, and that the ruder and more untractable the people, the severer must be the laws necessary to restrain them. The strength of the violent passions which prompt to crimes in a rude state of society is to be curbed only by the severest bodily inflictions. Punishments which operate by shame, or by restraints upon liberty, would have little effect in a state of this kind. But the fact does not rest upon conjecture. History actually informs us that the most ancient penal laws were remarkably severe. By the Mosaic law, the crimes of homicide, adultery, incest, and rape were punished with burning, stoning, and the most cruel kinds of death. Diodorus Siculus notices the same spirit of severity in the ancient laws of the Egyptians. The first laws of the Athenians, framed by Draco, are proverbial for their cruelty. The earliest laws of the Roman state, at least those of the Twelve Tables, are full of the most severe punishments, and capital inflictions for almost every offence. Cæsar informs us that the Gauls burnt their criminals alive, in honor of their gods. When we contrast these authorities with the opinion of the ingenious Lord Kames, we perceive the danger of writing history upon theoretical principles instead of facts.

Among the earliest laws of all states are those regarding marriage; for the institution of marriage is coeval with the formation of society. The progress is well described by the Roman poet:—

> "Inde casas postquam, ac pelles ignemque pararunt,
> Et mulier conjuncta viro concessit in unum,
> Castaque privatæ veneris connubia læta
> Cognita sunt, prolemque ex se videre creatam;
> Tum genus humanum primum mollescere cœpit."
>
> *Lucret.* I. v. 1009.

And this we observe is long prior to the formation of large com-

munities.* It is not till the arts had made some progress that men began to rear towns and cities.

It is impossible to conceive society to exist without the care of children, which presupposes a rule for ascertaining them. The first sovereigns of all nations, therefore, are said to have instituted marriage;—Menes, the first king of Egypt; Fohi, the first sovereign of China; Cecrops, the first legislator of the Greeks. The earliest laws of many civilized nations likewise provided encouragements for matrimony. By the Jewish law, a married man was for the first year exempted from going to war, and excused from the burden of any public office. Among the Peruvians he was free for a year from the payment of all taxes. The respect for the matrimonial union cannot be more clearly evinced than by the severity with which the greater part of the ancient nations restrained the crime of adultery. In reality no moral offence is equally pernicious to society.

In the marriages of many of the ancient nations a custom prevailed in many respects more honorable than the modern practice. The husband was obliged to purchase his wife, either by presents or by personal services performed to her father. When Abraham sent Eliezer to demand Rebecca for his son Isaac, he charged him with magnificent presents. Jacob served seven years for each of the daughters of Laban who were given to him in marriage. Homer alludes to this custom as subsisting in Greece. He makes Agamemnon say to Achilles that he will give him one of his daughters in marriage, and require no present in return. That the same custom was in use among the ancient inhabitants of Iberia, of Spain, Germany, Thrace, and Gaul, appears from Strabo, Tacitus, and many other writers; and the accounts of modern travellers assure us, that it prevails at this day in China, Tartary, Tonquin, among the Moors of Africa, and the savages of America.

As Herodotus is not always to be depended on in matters that did not fall under his own observation, I know not whether we should give implicit credit to what he relates of a singular practice which prevailed among the Assyrians, with respect to marriage; though it seems to have a natural foundation in the custom above-mentioned, which prevailed in most of the ancient nations. In every village, says that author, they brought together once in the year all the young women who were marriageable, and the public crier, beginning with the most beautiful, put them up to auction,

* After a fine description of the first stages of savage life, when man had scarcely advanced beyond the brute, the poet says:—"But when they began to build their first rude huts, to clothe themselves in skins, and had discovered the use of fire; when first one woman was joined to one man in the chaste endearments of mutual love, and saw their own offspring rising around them,—then only did the ferocious manners of the human race begin to soften."

one after another. The rich paid a high price for those whose figure seemed to them the most agreeable; and the money raised by the sale of these was assigned as a portion to the more homely. When it was their turn to be put up to sale, each woman was bestowed on the man who was willing to accept of her with the smallest portion; but no man was allowed to carry off the woman he had purchased, unless he gave security that he would take her to wife; and if afterwards it happened that the husband for any cause put away his wife, he was obliged to pay back the money he had received with her. The same author informs us that the Assyrian laws were most strict in providing that women should be well used by their husbands. The condition of woman is, in all ages, a criterion of the progress of civilization and refinement of manners.

In an early period of society, next in importance to the regulations of marriage, are the laws which regulate the division of a man's estate after his death. Anciently, among most nations, the father of a family seems to have had the absolute power of disposing of his effects in any manner he chose. Abraham bequeathed at his death his whole possessions to Isaac, though he had many other children. To these he had made some gifts during his lifetime. Jacob gave Joseph a portion above the rest of his brethren of the land he had taken from the Amorites. Job divided his whole inheritance in equal portions among his sons and daughters. The history of Jacob and Esau, however, affords a proof that certain rights and privileges were attendant on primogeniture, as the control over the younger children, of which even the parent could not deprive his first-born; an authority which we learn from Homer and Herodotus was inherent in the eldest son, by the custom of the most civilized nations of antiquity.

These laws, or rather constitutionary regulations, which I have mentioned, it will be easily seen, must have arisen necessarily and imperceptibly from the state of society, rather than from any express enactments of politicians and legislators. It was not till agriculture had first established the distinction of property and increased its value, till the wants of man were multiplied, and arts and commerce were introduced to supply them, that the rights of individuals became complicated, and regular systems of laws, enforced by proper penalties, became necessary to secure and defend them. Hence we may perceive the connection between history and jurisprudence, and the lights which they mutually throw upon each other. The surest key to the interpretation of the laws of a country is its history; and in like manner, where the history of a country is in any periods dark and uncertain, those obscurities are best elucidated by the study of its ancient laws.*

* Many laws contain in their preamble an explicit declaration of the political emergency which required their enactment. The evil to be remedied is par-

The invention of writing is among the improvements of a society, where men have attained to a considerable degree of civilization ;* for long before such inventions the more important affairs even of a rude society demand some solemn method of authentication. Contracts, sales, testaments, marriages, require a certain publicity and solemnity of transaction in order to enforce their observance ; and accordingly we find that among the early nations, or those which are yet in a state of barbarism, such affairs of importance are always transacted in public and before witnesses. Abraham, in the presence of the whole people, concludes a bargain for a place of burial for his wife Sarah. Homer, in his description of the sculpture which adorned the shield of Achilles, represents two citizens pleading concerning the fine due for a homicide. The cause is heard before the people, and both plaintiff and defendant appeal to the testimony of witnesses :—

"There in the forum swarm a numerous train,
The subject of debate a townsman slain :
One pleads the fine discharged, which one denied,
And bade the public and the laws decide :
The witness is produced on either hand :
For this or that the partial people stand :
Th' appointed heralds still the noisy bands,
And form a ring with sceptres in their hands.
On seats of stone, within the sacred place
The reverend elders paused upon the case ;
Alternate each th' attesting sceptre took,
And rising, solemn, each his sentence spoke."

*Pope's Iliad*, b. 18.

Some of the northern barbarous nations use, at this day, a mode of authenticating contracts by symbols, which is a nearer approach to the solemnity of writing. After the agreement is made, the parties cut a piece of wood irregularly into two tallies ; each party keeps one of these, and both are given up and destroyed when the bargain is fulfilled. A custom of this kind supposes a state of society where all agreements are of the simplest nature ; for these tallies, though they might certify the existence of a contract, could never give evidence of its tenor.

An invention somewhat more refined than this, and approaching still nearer to writing, was the Peruvian quipos, or cords of various colors, with certain knots upon them of different size, and differently combined. With these they contrived to accomplish most of the purposes of writing ; they formed registers which con-

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ticularly specified. In this view, such laws are in themselves a species of history. Other laws point out merely the state of manners, without reference to any particular fact. For attending to the period of time when these laws were enacted, such information is perhaps even of greater importance than the laws, for it supplies often what is either wanting, or but imperfectly to be gathered from the historical annals of a nation.

* On the origin of alphabetic writing see a very ingenious and elaborate dissertation by M. Goguet. Orig. des Lan. t. 1. liv. 2. c. 6.

tained the annals of their empire, the state of the public revenues, the account of their taxes for the support of government, and by means of them they recorded their astronomical observations.

One step farther in this process is the expression of ideas by painting. When the Spaniards arrived in Mexico, the inhabitants of the seacoasts sent advertence to their emperor Montezuma, by a large cloth, on which they had carefully depicted every thing they had seen of the appearance and progress of the invaders. Some specimens of the picture-writing of the Mexicans are to be found in Dr. Robertson's History of America. Among other nations the difficulty and inconvenience of this practice taught men to abridge these signs; to give, instead of a complete picture of the object, some characteristic part of it; and by the addition of certain marks or strokes to make these pictures significant even of relations, qualities, passions, and sentiments. It is certain that by the hieroglyphical writing of the Egyptians was conveyed a great deal of complicated intelligence.*

With regard to the use made by the Egyptians of hieroglyphical writing, there have been different opinions. It has been disputed, for example, whether the Egyptians employed them for communicating knowledge, or for recording it while they meant at the same time to conceal that knowledge from the vulgar. The President Goguet has endeavored to reconcile both opinions. "It is easy to prove," says he, "that the Egyptians used hieroglyphics at first, only to transmit the knowledge of their laws, their customs, and their history to posterity. It was nature and necessity, not art and choice, that produced the several kinds of hieroglyphic writing. It was an imperfect and defective invention, suited to the ignorance of the early ages. The Egyptians used it because they were ignorant of letters. Afterwards, when by intercourse with the Greeks the Egyptians learned the use of alphabetic characters, they abandoned the hieroglyphic writing, which

* "The history of the world," says Mr. Barrow, "affords abundant evidence that, in the dawn of civilization, most nations endeavored to fix and to perpetuate ideas by painting the figures of the objects that produced them. The Bosjesmen Hottentots, the most wild and savage race perhaps of human beings, are in the constant habit of drawing on the sides of caverns the representations of the different animals peculiar to the country. When I visited some of those caverns, I considered such drawings as the employment of idle hours; but on since reflecting that in all such caverns are also to be seen the figures of Dutch boors (who hunt these miserable creatures like wild beasts) in a variety of attitudes; some with guns in their hands, and others in the act of firing upon their countrymen; wagons sometimes proceeding, and at others standing still, the oxen unyoked and the boors sleeping, and these representations generally followed by a number of lines scored like so many tallies, I am inclined to think they have adopted this method of informing their companions of the number of their enemies, and the magnitude of the danger. The animals represented were generally such as are to be met with in the district where the drawings appeared; this, to a people who subsist by the chase and by plunder, might serve as another piece of important information."—*Barrow's Travels in China*, p. 246.

soon ceased to be generally understood. It was then that the Egyptian priests, who like other learned men in rude ages sought to conceal and make a mystery of their knowledge, used the hieroglyphic writing as a convenient veil."

But all those methods of recording or conveying intelligence which were in use before the invention of alphabetic writings, were found extremely unfit for two most important purposes: the recording of historical events, and the promulgation of laws. It was therefore necessary for the early nations to adopt some other method of record and publication; and none other adequate to the imperfection of their knowledge and attainments was so suitable for those purposes as poetical composition. Poetry or song was therefore in all nations the first vehicle of history, and the earliest mode of promulgating laws: for nothing was found equally capable of striking with force the imagination, and impressing the memory. The earliest poetry of all nations is devoted to the celebration of the praises of their gods, and to the commemoration of the exploits of illustrious heroes. When society has made some advancement, and laws are established to guard the rights and privileges of men, a legislator, observing with what avidity the songs of the bards are listened to; how universally they are circulated, and how tenaciously retained, judiciously avails himself of the same vehicle for the publication of his laws. Plato, in his *Minos*, informs us, that the first laws of all nations were composed in verse and sung. Apollo is recorded to have been one of the first legislators, and to have published his laws to the sound of his harp, that is, set them to music. That this mode of promulgation was in use among the ancient Greeks, the word Νόμος, which signifies both a law and a song, is direct proof: and Aristotle, in his problems, inquiring into the reason of this conformity of names between two such different objects, gives this express reason, that before the use of writing, it was customary to keep the laws in remembrance by singing them; and this, according to the same author, was the custom of many different nations. The laws of the ancient inhabitants of Spain were all in verse; as were likewise the laws of Tuisto, the first legislator of the ancient Germans.

Another mode of preserving the remembrance of historical events was by visible monuments, which were comparatively rude or artificial in their structure, according to the condition of society, or the age in which they were erected. Such are those heaps of stones raised as memorials of ancient battles, single unhewn blocks, or adorned with rude sculpture, expressive of the actions commemorated; and in more polished times, columns, triumphal arches, and coins or medals on which writing and sculpture are united. With respect even to the rudest of all monuments, the *cairns* or heaps of stones, or single unsculptured blocks, the historical facts which they commemorated would long be preserved by tradition; for even a migration of the inhabitants of a country or its coloni-

zation by a new race, would not be followed by a total loss of its history. The new settlers would anxiously inquire into the meaning of such monuments, and preserve the tradition, as illustrating the ancient history of that country which they had subdued.

Coins and medals are the invention of a polished people, and are of singular use as the records of historical events. They have been justly termed portable monuments; and they have this advantage over the most durable structures that were ever raised by human industry, that, as vast numbers were commonly struck of the same impression, they stand a much fairer chance of passing down to posterity; and even their being lost or buried in the earth ensures their preservation. Of such medals or coins even the spurious copies, though a fraud upon the *curious* collectors and *virtuosi*, are of equal service with the original, for the purposes of the historian.*

Among the earliest institutions of all nations are those which regard *religious worship*. The sentiment of religion has its origin in the nature of the human mind, or in those passions which are a part of our constitution. Let us conceive an infant thrown by some chance into a solitary desert, and there to have grown to manhood without intercourse with any other being of his own species; I think it is highly probable that such a person would form to himself some idea of a First Cause, or creative power, to whom he would refer the origin of himself, and of all he saw around him. Perceiving a settled order in the course of the sun and motion of the stars, a regular vicissitude of day and night, and a stated return of seasons, his mind could not fail to attribute that order and regularity to the operation of wisdom combined with power; and thus he would conceive some dark idea of a Being, who directed, in some distant region, the existence, the duration, the order and progress of all inanimate and animated nature. The idea first conceived from the order and regularity of nature would be strengthened by every extraordinary occurrence; and the passion

* Medals are useful in explaining events which have been left doubtful by the historian, and they record many facts which history has omitted. The history of Palmyra would have been almost unknown but for the researches of M. Vaillant, who, from the existing medals, has made out an entire chronicle of the kings of Syria. Medals are likewise eminently useful in illustrating ancient manners and customs, in preserving the figures of ancient buildings, arms, implements of the arts, modes of dress, &c.: not to mention the pleasure they convey (a pleasure founded in the most natural and rational curiosity) in making us familiarly acquainted with the features of the great men of antiquity. As actual monuments of the fine arts, medals are entitled to great estimation. The sculpture of many of the ancient coins is superlatively beautiful, and they are supposed to exhibit on their reverses very exact representations of celebrated statues and paintings of antiquity which are now lost. This is rendered probable from the beautiful copies which we find on some of those coins of the celebrated statues which are yet preserved; as the *Venus de' Medici*, the *Hercules Farnese*, and the *Apollo Belvedere*. The progress of sculpture from its first rude commencement to its utmost perfection, and its equally sensible corruption and decline, are illustrated by the base inscription of the regular series of the Greek and Roman coins.

of fear combining its aid, the thunder, the hurricane, or the earthquake would be interpreted into an expression of the wrath of this great invisible being; whom, therefore, the solitary savage would endeavor to appease by humiliating himself before him, by supplicating his clemency, or strive to gain his favor by praises of his beneficence. Thus an untutored human creature, merely by the operation of his natural passions and uninstructed reason, which teaches that every effect must have a cause, and that a combined series of effects, cooperating to a wise and useful end, implies wisdom and benevolence in the cause, would arrive at the first great principles of religion. But before conceiving the idea of a Being utterly imperceptible to his senses, a savage might not unnaturally seek to find him in some of the most striking objects of sense, to which he owed his most apparent and sensible benefits. Thus the sun, whose benignant influence is perceived to extend over all nature, and whose light and heat are apparently the immediate causes of fecundity of nature in the production of most of her works—was the first object of worship among many of the ancient nations. The element of fire presented a symbol of the sun, as possessing his most notable qualities, and seemed to have been originally a portion of his substance. The moon, the stars, whose distance removes them, like the sun, from any positive ascertainment of their nature, while at the same time the regularity of their motions conveys to the rude and uninstructed mind some idea of a living and intelligent power which animates them, would naturally attract their share of respect and adoration. So, in like manner, as the influence of some of these superior bodies was plainly perceived to extend to inferior and terrestrial substances, as in the instances of the tides, mutations, and alternations of the seasons, it was a most natural idea to conceive that all the phenomena of the universe, in the production and perpetuation of man, animals, plants, &c. were to be referred to the agency of those superior and ruling powers.

The unity of a Supreme Being is an idea too refined for the rude and uninstructed mind, which cannot easily conceive the notion of a being extending his influence and agency at the same moment through all the boundless regions of space and upon all the modifications of matter. Hence it would seem probable that not one, but several divinities were concerned in the formation, and shared between them the regulation, of the universe.

The symbolical mode of writing, already taken notice of, is likewise a probable source of the polytheism and idolatrous superstitions of many of the ancient nations. In the rude method, antecedent to writing, of communicating ideas by painting, if it was necessary to typify a god, and to describe his attributes, the artist had no other resource than to join to the image of the god those animals whose qualities were most expressive of his attributes. In the hieroglyphical method of writing which succeeded to that of painting, and was a more compendious mode of communicating

ideas, the animals naturally came to stand for symbols of the god himself; and the vulgar and illiterate would behold in those animals the figure of the god, which the wiser and more learned knew to be only typical of his attributes. As it was observed that the same god was sometimes represented by different animals, the notion would naturally arise to a rude mind, that this god occasionally transformed himself into different shapes; and hence sprang the belief of the transmigrations and metamorphoses of the gods.

The apotheosis of heroes, and the divine worship paid to men who had rendered eminent services to their country, are not more difficult to be accounted for. The homage and respect paid to the chief by his tribe must have originated with society itself. The belief of the immortality of the soul—a belief which, being founded in the nature of the human mind and its affections, obtains in every period of society, and equally among the most barbarous as among the most refined nations of the earth—had generally this concomitant idea, that the spirits of the dead are employed in the same actions and pursuits which had been their most pleasurable occupation in life. Hence, as the heroic chief had been deservedly honored for his actions while in life, it was natural to continue those honors after his death, while it was believed that he still extended his shadowy arm over his faithful tribe, still secretly animated them in the hour of danger, and was the unseen witness of all their exploits in the career of glory.*

It is unnecessary to pursue this subject to a greater length. Enough has been said to show that it is easy, without having recourse to fanciful systems or laborious investigations of mythology, to furnish a natural account of the origin of idolatry and polytheism. Many excellent reflections on this subject are contained in the apocryphal book termed the Wisdom of Solomon; a book which exhibits a profound knowledge of human nature, and abounds in the most excellent precepts of morality. On the absurdity of

* The following just and beautiful reflections occur in a letter of Dr. Rundle, bishop of Derry, written February, 1737, on occasion of the death of his friend and patron, Chancellor Talbot.

"It was the love for such benevolent characters which first dictated to every nation the belief of the immortality of the soul. The learned expressed this affection by arguments to prove the truth of this hope, which such worthiness had lighted up in their hearts. But the ignorant uttered the genuine sentiments of their nature by worshipping those benefactors of mankind, as soon as they withdrew from the earth. They judged that their goodness would secure them an interest in the governor of the world, and recommend them to his love. What he loves he will reward in the manner which will make them most happy. Enjoying the desire of the heart is the sincerest felicity. The desire of their souls was always to make others virtuous and prosperous. New abilities to serve those above whom they delighted to bless when below, they imagined, therefore, the only suitable and acceptable reward to such generous natures. Hence they concluded them appointed guardians over their kindred people, and from lamenting, were by an enthusiasm of gratitude, misled to worship them. A love of merit thus betrayed them into error and superstition; but methinks, virtue herself will plead and obtain pardon for such idolaters."

some of those whimsical mythologies, and even of their pernicious tendency, I shall afterwards have occasion to make some remarks, in treating of the earliest periods of the history of the Greeks.

Among the ancient nations we find the priesthood always exercised by the chief or sovereign; for the chief must have presided in the performance of religious worship, because he presided in every thing. But the sovereign of an extensive empire was necessarily obliged to share that office with his subjects, and to appoint a certain number of priests to officiate in his room, while he himself retained the function of supreme pontiff. Hence arose that connexion between the monarchy and the priesthood in most of the ancient kingdoms, because the priests considered themselves as the deputies of the prince. The respect which they obtained from that character, joined to the reverence for their sacred function, together with the opinion of their superior knowledge and learning, naturally made the illiterate refer to them their differences to their decision as umpires: and when society had so far advanced that there was an approach towards a system of legislation, the care of framing the laws was committed to the priests; when committed to writing, they were deposited in their temples; and from their order the first tribunals were supplied with judges chosen by the sovereign.

We may presume with some reason, that in the early ages the priests were among the first who cultivated the sciences. The useful arts are the immediate offspring of necessity; and in the infancy of society, every individual, according as he feels his wants, is put to the necessity of exercising his talents in some rude contrivances to supply them. The skill to construct instruments for the capture or destruction of animals, or for offence and defence in war, is found among the most barbarous nations. The rude arts of forming a clothing for the body, and the constructions of huts for shelter against the inclemencies of the air, form among such nations the occupation of every individual of the tribe or community, and even of both sexes. The contrivances of savages in the useful arts often show considerable ingenuity. The North American Indians, having no iron, use stone hatchets in cutting down the largest trees. They found, says Charlevoix, in his Travels in Canada, a very hard and tough species of flint, which by great labor they sharpened for the head of the instrument. The difficulty lay in fastening it to the handle. They cut off the top of a young tree, and making a transverse slit, insert the stone into the opening. The parts of the tree growing together close so firmly upon the stone that it is impossible to move it. Then they cut the tree of such length as they judge sufficient for the handle.

The first boats were hollowed trunks of trees, which the Greeks termed *monoxyla*. Where trees could not be found sufficiently large, it was necessary to join planks together; and sometimes the

thick and pliable bark of trees, sewed together with the sinews of animals, formed a light canoe. The structure and shape of these vessels were in imitation of the form of a fish. The head or prow was sharp and conical; a movable plank in the stern imitated the action of a fish's tail, and the oars or paddles served the purpose of the fins in giving motion to the boats; such canoes are used to this day among the North American Indians.

The President Goguet has, with much ingenuity and industry, collected a great mass of information relative to the origin of the arts among the nations of antiquity; and to his learned work I refer the reader who wishes further light on those topics.

The art of agriculture is not practised till society is considerably advanced, and individuals have obtained a determined share in the property of the lands which they inhabit. It had its origin therefore in those countries which are by nature most fertile, and which, producing abundance of food, made the inhabitants stationary, as they had no inducement to roam in quest of subsistence. The early historians attribute the origin of agriculture to kings; as to Menes or Osiris among the Egyptians, and Fohi among the Chinese: the meaning of which is no more than this:—that the first sovereigns, who, with their nation or tribe, occupied a fruitful country and became stationary in it, establishing such regulations regarding property in land as would secure individuals in their possessions, naturally gave rise to the experiments of such proprietors to fertilize their grounds, to till, to sow, reap and store up their fruits, which a wandering savage would never think of or attempt.

But while the useful arts are the offspring of necessity, and are therefore in some degree known and practised in the earliest periods of society, the sciences, on the other hand, are less the production of necessity than of ease and leisure. Before the origin of the sciences, society must have made great progress. They presupposed an extensive and populous community, where individuals have either acquired such opulence from the successful cultivation of the arts, or from commerce, as to allow them the indulgence of that ease and immunity from labor which invites to study and speculation; or they must have been maintained for special purposes by the sovereign or by the community in such a situation. This last was the condition of the priests; and, accordingly, we find that, among the Egyptians, one of the most ancient and early civilized nations, the priests were the depositaries of all the sciences. Aristotle informs us that the Egyptian priests consumed the greatest part of their time in abstract studies; and when Herodotus, Diodorus, or Plato relate any fact with regard to the sciences in Egypt, they always inform us, that they received it from the mouths of the priests. Among the Babylonians too, the Chaldeans or Chaldees, who were their priests, and formed a body distinct from the rest of the people, were chiefly occupied in the study of the sciences. The name *Chaldean*, occurring very fre-

quently in Scripture as synonymous with *soothsayer*, shows the nature of those sciences which they chiefly cultivated.* It is not at all improbable that the frivolous and absurd science of judicial astrology, which has its origin in the prevailing passion of the unenlightened mind to dive into futurity, was the first motive that led men to the attentive observation of the motions of the heavenly bodies; and consequently that superstition was the parent of that useful and sublime science of astronomy.† It is certain that to those Chaldæans or soothsayers the best informed authors of antiquity have joined in attributing the first astronomical discoveries. According to Diodorus, they had observed the motion of the planets; they had divided the zodiac into twelve signs, and each sign into thirty degrees; and they had ascertained the precise length of the year very near to the truth.

As an attention to their own preservation is the first care of mankind, we may naturally conjecture, that among those sciences to which in the early nations men would chiefly devote their attention, that of medicine would have a principal place. All savage nations have a pharmacy of their own, equal in general to their wants. Luxury creating new diseases requires a profounder knowledge of medicine and of the animal economy. Savages are often eminently skilful in the knowledge of the virtues of plants in the cure of diseases, and are very dexterous in the treatment of wounds. But without the knowledge of the internal structure of the body, medicine can hardly deserve the name of a science. And we are certain that anatomy could only have been practised in an advanced state of society, when arts had attained a considerable degree of perfection. The Jews, we know, in the days of Moses, used in some operations of surgery a sharp stone instead of a knife; a certain proof that they could not have dissected a human body. And although the Egyptians practised very early the evisceration and embalming of bodies, we hear nothing of any attempts at anatomy till the age of the Ptolemies, after the time of Alexander the Great, when, as we learn from Pliny, those monarchs established a medical school at Alexandria, and commanded dead bodies to be dissected, for the improvement of medicine and surgery; a circumstance which seems to indicate that it was at that time a new practice.—But of the arts and sciences of this remarkable people, the Egyptians, as well as of their government, laws, and manners, I propose to treat more particularly in the next chapter.

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* Although Chaldæa is the appropriate name of that region of Assyria in which Babylon was situated, the term *Chaldæan* was used, not only in Scripture but by the ancient profane authors, to denote *an astrologer or soothsayer*.

† Kepler remarks, that astrology is the foolish daughter of a wise mother; but it is more probable that the genealogy was just the reverse,—and that the wise daughter sprang from the foolish mother.

## CHAPTER IV.

Of the Egyptians—Early Civilization—Inundation of the Nile—Government—Laws—Manners—Arts—Obelisks and Pyramids—Sciences—Philosophical Opinions—Character.

The Egyptians are so remarkable a people, and boast of such extraordinary progress in civilization and in the arts, while the rest of the world was comparatively involved in darkness and ignorance, that their early history deservedly claims a preferable share of attention to any of the cotemporary nations of antiquity. It is highly probably too, that from this people, as from a focus of illumination, most of the European nations have, by the natural progress of knowledge, received a great part of their instruction both in the arts and in the sciences. The Egyptians instructed and enlightened the Greeks; the Greeks performed the same beneficial office to the Romans, who, in their turn, instructing the nations whom they conquered or colonized, have transmitted the rudiments of that knowledge which the industry and the genius of the moderns are continually extending and advancing to perfection.

It is probable that the Egyptians were among the most early civilized of the nations of the earth; and hence arises some excuse for that vanity, which they possessed in common with most nations, of attributing to themselves a most prodigious antiquity. In the chronicles recorded, or more probably fabricated by Manetho, the Egyptian monarchy had subsisted before his time (300 years A. C.) for more than 100,000 years. Laying little weight on such extravagant computations, we may conclude with some reason, that at least they were a very ancient and early civilized people. It is evident from the books of Moses, that in the time of Abraham, about 430 years after the flood, Egypt was a populous country, the seat of a very splendid and well-regulated monarchy. In the days of Jacob, we see further proofs of its civilization: the kingdom divided into departments or municipalities; ministers for state-affairs, with whom the sovereign held council; prisons for the confinement of criminals, which argues a system of penal laws properly enforced; a priesthood enjoying settled revenues; a trade in slaves—all these circumstances indicate a great advancement in civilization, and a proportional antiquity.

M. Voltaire, who is frequently more fanciful than judicious in

his conjectures, and gives too much scope to theory in his historical writings, is inclined to question the common opinion of the antiquity of the Egyptian nation; and imagines that the country of Egypt was not peopled till the neighbouring African or Arabian tribes had made some advancement in agriculture and in the arts, so to regulate and turn to their advantage those periodical inundations of the Nile, which, says he, must have rendered that country uninhabitable for four months in the year. But here the theory is at variance with the facts. The periodical inundation of the Nile originally extended over a very narrow tract only of the country of Egypt, nor were its benefits at all considerable, till the art and industry of the people, by intersecting the adjacent lands with numberless canals, and making large reservoirs in the upper country to let down the water through those canals, contrived to spread the inundation over a much greater extent of ground than it would naturally have covered. There never were any efforts made to restrain those inundations, which the Egyptians justly considered as their greatest blessing, and the source of their country's fertility. All their endeavors, on the contrary, were, and are at this day, to extend their effects over as great a portion of the land as possible. So far, therefore, from any argument arising from the nature of this country against the antiquity of its population, a very strong argument thence arises in favor of that antiquity: for, where nature had done so much in fertilizing the banks of a fine river, and an easy method presented itself of extending that fertility over all the level country, it is probable that there men would first form stationary settlements, and the art of agriculture be first practised, where nature so kindly invited them to second her operations by art and industry.

And here it may be incidentally remarked, that the cause of the periodical inundation of the Nile has been satisfactorily explained by Pliny (Nat. Hist. l. v. cap. 9), and nearly in similar terms by Dr. Pococke. The north winds, says this writer, which begin to blow about the end of May, drive the clouds formed by the vapors of the Mediterranean to the southward, as far as the mountains of Ethiopia, where, being stopped in their course, and condensed on the summits of those mountains, they fall down in violent rains, which continue for some months. The same winds likewise sensibly increase the inundation in the level country at the mouth of the river, by driving in the water from the Mediterranean. The increase of the river necessary to produce a season of fertility is from fourteen to sixteen cubits. If the waters do not rise to fourteen, according to the Nileometer, which is a stone pillar erected on the point of an island in the river between Geeza and Cairo, it is accounted a season of scarcity, and the inhabitants have a proportional abatement of their taxes; if they rise to sixteen cubits, there is generally an abundant harvest. We have already observed that, without the aid of art, these inundations

would be confined to a narrow portion of the country, and in that case the height of the flood would be more prejudicial than serviceable. It is by the regulation and distribution of the waters by means of numberless canals, which extend to a considerable distance, that the benefit of the periodical floods is rendered general. When the inundation has attained its height, as marked by the Nilometer, a proclamation is made for the opening of these canals; and they are likewise shut by a similar order of government when the season of irrigation is over.

The earliest accounts of the Egyptians mention them as living under a monarchical government; and, as in most monarchies, the crown, probably at first elective, had soon become hereditary. The power of the sovereign, however, if we may credit the accounts of ancient authors, who, in the history of this people, have in many things palpably displayed both exaggeration and falsehood, was admirably limited by the laws, which even went so far as to regulate the stated employments of the prince during all the hours of the day. These notions, it must be owned, are not easily reconcilable with the ideas which the same authors give of the despotic authority of those princes: of the luxury and splendor in which they lived; the superstitious veneration that was paid to their persons; and the abject slavery in which the lower ranks of the people were kept, whom the sovereigns, for the gratification of their own vanity, employed in the severest labor in constructing those immense fabrics which seem to have been reared for no other end than to excite the wonder of posterity.

The cares both of civil government and of religion seem in Egypt to have been committed to the same hands. Besides the ordinary offices of government, a principal part of the duty of the monarch was the regulation of all that regarded religion. The priests, on the other hand, who formed a very numerous body, and had a third part of the lands allotted to them in property, were not confined to the exercise of religious duties, but filled the highest offices in the state. They had the custody of the public records; it was their province to impose and levy the taxes; to regulate weights and measures; and out of their order were chosen all the magistrates and judges.

The supreme national tribunal in Egypt was composed of thirty judges; ten from each of the three principal cities of Heliopolis, Thebes, and Memphis; and to these judges a solemn oath was administered on their entry upon office, that even the commands of their sovereign should not sway them in the execution of their duty. The administration of justice was no burden on the subjects; the tribunals were open to all ranks of the people, without expense of any kind; as no professional advocates were employed for the pleading of causes, and the judges, whose business it was to investigate and do justice, were supported at the expense of

the state; a regulation having a considerable show of wisdom if obtaining in a small state at an early period of society, but evidently not adapted for an extensive and highly civilized community.

The penal laws of Egypt were remarkably severe. Whoever had it in his power to save the life of a citizen, and neglected that duty, was punished as his murderer: a law which we must presume admitted of much limitation according to circumstances. It appears to have been from the same motive of preserving the lives of the citizens, that if a person was found murdered, the city within whose bounds the murder had been committed was obliged to embalm the body in the most costly manner, and bestow on it the most sumptuous funeral. Perjury was justly held a capital crime; for there is no offence productive of more pernicious consequences to society. Calumniators were condemned to the same punishment which the calumniated person either had or might have suffered, had the calumny been believed. The citizen who was so base as to disclose the secrets of the state to its enemies, was punished by the cutting out of his tongue; and the forger of public instruments or private deeds, the counterfeiter of the current coin, and the user of false weights and measures, were condemned to have both their hands cut off. The laws for the preservation of the chastity of women were extremely rigid: emasculation was the punishment of him who violated a free woman, and burning to death was the punishment of an adulterer.

The President Goguet ranks among the penal laws of the Egyptians a singular regulation of policy which is mentioned by Diodorus. It is generally known how much the ancients concerned themselves with regard to the disposal of their bodies after death. To be deprived of funeral rites they considered as one of the greatest calamities. The Egyptians did not, like most other nations, consign the bodies of the dead to destruction; they preserved them by embalming, and celebrated their obsequies with extraordinary solemnity. But these funeral honors were never bestowed unless in virtue of a solemn and judicial decree. A court composed of forty judges granted their warrant for every funeral. The character of the deceased was rigorously investigated, and if any criminal or improper conduct was proved, the customary honors were refused to him. If his life had been virtuous and exempt from all blame, a public panegyric was pronounced on his memory, and permission was granted for the usual embalming and obsequies. The most singular and at the same time the most admirable circumstance attending this custom, was, that the sovereigns themselves, though venerated during their lives with an almost superstitious regard, which forbade all scrutiny into their actions, were yet after death subjected to the same rigorous and impartial inquest with the meanest of their subjects; and Diodorus assures us that some of the Egyptian kings had been

deprived of funeral obsequies, and their memories thus consigned to infamy, by the judgment of that solemn tribunal.

Among the most remarkable laws of the Egyptians was that of Amasis, which ordained every individual to appear annually before a particular magistrate, and give an account of his profession, and the manner in which he acquired his subsistence. A capital punishment, it is said, was decreed against the person who could not show that he procured his living by honest means. We shall observe a similar institution in treating of the Athenian republic. The unnecessary contracting of debts was likewise restrained in Egypt by a singular and very laudable regulation. The debtor was obliged to give in pledge the embalmed body of his father, to remain with the creditor till the debt was discharged. He who died without redeeming this sacred pledge was deprived himself of funeral obsequies.

The population of Egypt was encouraged by many salutary laws. The exposing of infants was restrained by the severest penalties. A man was obliged to rear and educate not only the children born to him in a state of marriage, but to acknowledge for legitimate, and maintain, all the children he had by his slaves or concubines. Homicide was punished with death, even when committed on a slave.

The manners of the Egyptians were very early formed. We find the greatest part of those customs which are mentioned by Diodorus, Herodotus, and others of the ancient historians, to have been common at the time when Joseph was carried into Egypt. This people, according to the testimony of all antiquity, discovered a great constancy of national character, and a singular attachment to their ancient manners and customs. But these underwent a remarkable change in the time of Psammeticus, who began to reign in Egypt 670 years before the Christian era. This prince opened the ports of Egypt, both on the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, to all strangers, and gave particular encouragement to the Greeks to settle in his dominions. He assigned them portions of land in the country, employed some learned men among them to instruct the Egyptian youth in the Greek language, and endeavored by every means to overcome that illiberal prejudice which had hitherto kept this people sequestered from all other nations. Such, likewise, was the policy of Amasis, who reigned about a century after Psammeticus, and who, as he may properly be considered the last, so he was one of the wisest and the best of the Egyptian monarchs. It was in the reign of his son Psammenitus that Cambyses overturned this ancient monarchy, and reduced Egypt into a province of the Persian empire. But here we are anticipating the order of events. It is the state of Egypt, the attainments and the manners of the nation before its conquest and reduction, that we are at present considering.

We must regard the ancient Egyptians as the earliest nation

whom history assures us with certainty to have made any progress in those arts which conduce to the luxuries or elegancies of life. They understood very early the use of metals, both in the fabrication of serviceable utensils, in ornamental decorations, and in the coining of money as a medium of commerce. Of this we have abundant evidence both from the sacred and profane historians.

The science of architecture was early brought to great perfection in Egypt. The antiquity of those immense structures which yet remain in that country is extremely uncertain. It seems peculiar to the climate of Egypt, that time appears scarcely to make any sensible impression on those monuments of human industry. The cause is plausibly assigned by *De Maillet*, in his *Description de l'Egypte*. Rain and frost, says that author, which in other countries are the destroyers of all the works of art which are exposed to the air, are utterly unknown in Egypt. The structures of that country, its pyramids and its obelisks, can sustain no injury unless from the sun and wind, which have scarce any sensible effect in wasting or corroding their materials. Some of the Egyptian obelisks, which are supposed to be more ancient than the pyramids, and consequently above 3000 years old, are entire at this day: one in particular may be seen at Rome, which was transported thither by Augustus, and which Pliny says was supposed to be older than the time of Sesostris. Those immense masses, consisting of one entire block of granite, were hewn in the quarries of Upper Egypt, whence they were conveyed by water to the place where they were to be erected. The contrivance for transporting them is described by Pliny, and is equally simple and ingenious. The Nile runs near to the base of those mountains where the quarries are situated. A canal was cut from the river to the spot where the obelisk lay, and made to pass under it, so as to leave the stone supported by its two extremities resting on either bank of the canal. Two broad boats were then loaded with a great weight of stones, so as to sink them so deep in the water as to allow them to pass freely under the obelisk: when immediately under it, the stones were thrown out; the boats, of consequence, rose in the water, and bore up the obelisk, which thus passed along the canal into the Nile, and was thence guided by other canals to the place where it was to be erected. Of the purpose for which these obelisks were reared we can only form conjectures, as the ancient writers give us no information. It has been supposed that they were intended to serve as gnomons for astronomical purposes, or to determine the length of the solar year by the measure of the meridian shadows: but their situation upon uneven ground, and the number of them, sometimes three or four erected in the same place, give no countenance to that idea. Pliny indeed tells us that one of the Egyptian obelisks which was brought to Rome and placed in the Campus Martius, was applied by Augustus to serve the purpose of a gnomon to an immense sun-

dial, which was engraven on a level pavement of stone at the base of the obelisk; but as he terms this a new and admirable use of the obelisk, we must thence infer that it was different from their original purpose, which was probably to commemorate or record either public events in the history of the nation, or to be registers of the seasons as affected by the periodical inundations of the Nile.

The whole country of Egypt abounds with the remains of ancient magnificence. There is reason to believe, that Thebes, in Upper Egypt, was, at the time of the Trojan war, one of the most opulent and best-peopled cities in the universe. The ancient authors assure us that no city in the world equalled it in ornamental buildings. Diodorus mentions in particular four temples, the largest and most ancient of which remained at the time when he himself was in Egypt (about A. D. 20) and was half a league in circumference. Its hundred gates mentioned by Homer, which could each send out 200 horsemen and chariots, is a bold poetical exaggeration; but if the ruins, yet visible at Luxor, as described by Pococke, Granger, and later travellers, are, as they have been generally supposed, the remains of Thebes, they give very high ideas of the extent and magnificence of that ancient city.

The pyramids in the neighborhood of Memphis have been by some authors assigned to the age of Sesostris; but this era, which is itself extremely uncertain, is, according to all probability, much too early for the date of those structures. There is ground to believe that they did not exist in the age of Homer; for that poet, who frequently mentions Egypt, and is fond of relating singularities of that country, says nothing of the pyramids, and makes no mention of Memphis, though that city lay in the direct way to Thebes. Aristotle has made this observation; and it has hence been inferred, with much probability, that in the age of Homer those stupendous fabrics either did not exist or were but just building. Homer, according to the most probable authorities, lived about 900 years B. C., which brings the date of the pyramids, if then building, nearly to the age assigned them by Diodorus. But neither the age nor the builders of those structures are known with any degree of certainty: a just reward, as Pliny well remarks, of the vanity of such undertakings.

The description of those remarkable monuments has been given by many travellers. A more curious investigation would be to discover the manner in which those immense piles were reared, as well as the purpose for which they were erected. The first, however, does not fall within the province of a work of this nature: I content myself, therefore, with observing, that the President Goguet, in his Origin of Laws, vol. iii., has given a very plausible and curious account of the construction of the pyramids, resting chiefly on the authority of Herodotus, to which I refer the reader. On the second head, it may be remarked, that the Egyptians

entertained the belief that death did not separate the soul from the body, but that the connection remained as long as the latter continued entire and unconsumed. It was, therefore, their utmost care to preserve the carcasses of the dead from the natural decay from corruption, as well as from accidental violence. Hence the practice of embalming the dead, and of depositing them in places secured from all injury. The bodies of the rich were preserved at a vast expense by taking out the corruptible viscera, filling the cavity with the strongest and most costly spices and unguents, wrapping them round in numberless folds of linen, impregnated with resinous substances, incrusting them with thick coats of paint, and lastly, casing them in thick boxes of the most durable species of wood. The bodies of the inferior classes of the people were simply injected with some composition which exsiccated the entrails and fleshy parts, and were covered over by a cheaper and simpler process, with some resinous substance which excluded the air. From a custom already mentioned, regarding the pledging of these mummies as a security for debts, it would appear that it was the practice to keep them unburied at least for the course of one generation. After that period, they were deposited in caverns, dug in dry and rocky situations, of which they concealed the entrance with the utmost care and artifice of construction. The sovereigns, who could command the labors of their subjects, thought they could not employ them better than in building such repositories for their bodies after death as should be proof against the injuries of time, and even in some measure set human malice at defiance; for the demolition of a pyramid, considering the immense blocks of stone of which it is formed, would be a work attended with such labor and difficulty, that no ordinary motive could prompt to it.*

* The largest of the pyramids is an equilateral square, of which each side measures at the base 693 English feet. The stones, of which it is composed, are many of them 30 feet in length, 4 in height, and 3 in breadth. The superficial contents of the area are 480,249 feet, or something more than 11 English acres. The height of the pyramid is 481 feet, which is about the height of the top of the cupola of St. Paul's church in London. It rises from the base to the apex in steps of near 4 feet in height, and the summit is a square platform of 13 feet, composed of 10 or 12 massy stones. This form of construction in the manner of steps was probably given to the building that it might receive a coating of marble, by laying upon each step a block of a prismatical form, which would thus bring the exterior of the building to a smooth surface, which is the appearance of most of the smaller pyramids at this day. A late traveller, Mr. Bruce, has hence formed a new opinion with regard to the construction of those masses. It is his notion that they have been formed out of immense insulated rocks, which stood upon the spot; and which, after having been hewn into a pyramidal form, were incrusted or coated over with a mason work of marble or stone. This idea, if just, would render the construction of those vast piles considerably easier, and more within the compass of human industry, than the common opinions regarding the mode of their fabrication. "It has been a constant belief," says Mr. Bruce, "that the stones composing those pyramids have been brought from the Libyan mountains; although any one

It must be allowed, that those monuments which remain to us of the works of art among the Egyptians, though venerable on account of their antiquity, and sometimes exhibiting a grand and sublime appearance from their immensity, are extremely defective in beauty and elegance. How infinitely inferior, in point of taste, are the pyramids, the obelisks, the sphynx and colossal statues, the pillars of Luxor, to the simplest remains of the ancient temples in Greece! In architecture, one of the most obvious inventions, and one of the greatest improvements, both in point of utility and beauty, the construction of an arch, was quite unknown to the Egyptians. This defect gives an awkward and heavy appearance to their buildings, and must have occasioned a vast expense of labor, which might otherwise have been spared. In the arts of painting and sculpture, those specimens, of which a vast number have remained entire to our days, are, in general, greatly deficient in elegance and beauty. In the Egyptian statues, we may observe a perfect knowledge of the human proportions, but without any capacity in the artist to give to his figures animation or action. We may remark, in general, with regard to the remains of the arts in Egypt, that they either occasion surprise from their immensity and the prodigious labor and cost employed in their construction, or are objects of curiosity on account of the very early period at which they were executed; but, considered as objects of taste, they afford but a small degree of pleasure to the critical eye.

As the Egyptians were more early acquainted than any other nations of antiquity with the useful, and even the elegant arts, they were no less eminent for their early cultivation of the sciences. The arts and sciences are indeed so intimately connected, that there can be no great progress in the one, without a proportional advancement in the other; as for example, architecture, which requires a knowledge of geometry and the laws of mechanics; the working of metals, dyeing, which presuppose an acquaintance with chemical principles. "When we see," says Millot, "the Egyptians surveying their lands with precision, distributing the waters of the Nile by numberless canals, measuring with exactness the increase of the river, making and employing various species of machinery, measuring time, and calculating the revolutions of the stars, we must suppose them to have attained a considerable proficiency in the science of mathematics. The Egyp-

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who will take the pains to remove the sand on the south side, will there find the solid rock hewn into steps. And in the roof of the large chamber, where the sarcophagus stands, as also in the top of the roof of the gallery, as you go up into the chamber, you see large fragments of the rock; affording an unanswerable proof, that those pyramids were once huge rocks, standing where they now are; that some of them, the most proper from their form, were chosen for the body of the pyramid, and the others hewn down into steps, to serve for the superstructure, and the exterior parts of them."—*Bruce's Travels into Egypt and Abyssinia*, vol. i.

tians understood the division of the zodiac into twelve signs, which argues a considerable advancement in astronomy. They were able to calculate both solar and lunar eclipses. Thales, who owed all his astronomical knowledge to the Egyptians, predicted that famous eclipse of the sun 585 years before the Christian era, which separated the armies of the Medes and Lydians at the moment of an engagement. The position of the pyramids, most exactly corresponding to the four cardinal points, is, not without reason, urged as a proof of the knowledge of the Egyptians in astronomy; for it requires, even at present, no mean knowledge in that science to trace a meridian line with perfect accuracy. It is probable, too, that the Egyptians had an idea of the motion of the earth, since Pythagoras, who has given plain intimations of that opinion, is known to have acquired his astronomical knowledge in that country."

I have already taken notice of the very limited knowledge which the Egyptians possessed of medicine till the age of the Ptolemies, when an anatomical school was founded at Alexandria.

With regard to their philosophical opinions, they maintained themselves so mysterious a silence, and the accounts of those few of the ancients who were admitted to a knowledge of their mysteries are so obscure and imperfect, that it is, at this day, scarcely possible to attain to any distinct ideas regarding either their moral, physical, or theological doctrines. On the one hand, it seems a plain inference, that if the morality taught by the priests was not more pure than what was practised by the people, the Egyptians would certainly merit on that score no encomium. On the other hand, we must conclude, that if the moral doctrines of Pythagoras and of Plato, who both studied in Egypt, were learned in that school, their speculative opinions were right, whatever we may judge of their practice. In theology, too, while the superstitious worship of the common people was so grossly absurd as to draw on them the ridicule of all other nations, the secret doctrines of the priests are generally allowed to have been pure, refined, and rational. One Great Intelligence was supposed to preside over all nature. Subordinate spirits, portions of that Intelligence, presided over the actions of mankind, as the guardians of the human soul, which was derived from the same divine original, but was destined to undergo a certain number of transmigrations through different bodies, before it was reunited to the great parent-spirit. They believed in the immortality of the soul. Diodorus tells us that they esteemed the present state of existence to be of no value in comparison with that which was to come, and which was to be the reward of a life spent in this world in the practice of virtue.

The Egyptians supposed the material world to have arisen from the joint operation of three principles. The first was the Great Intelligence or universal spirit—the *anima mundi*—which gives form to the universe and to all its parts. The second was Matter,

which they supposed to have existed from all eternity. The third was the Nature of that Matter, which, from its imperfection, opposed that good which the universal spirit always aimed at producing, and frequently contaminated his works with evil. To these three principles, in their mythology, they gave the appellations of Osiris, Isis, and Typhon. The priests illustrated these radical doctrines by numberless allegories and fables, which, being literally received by the vulgar, produced a thousand absurdities in their worship and opinions, while the real meaning was known but to a few.

We have seen in the Egyptians, a people remarkable for their early civilization—for the antiquity of their government, the systematic order of their civil policy, the wisdom of many of their laws, and their singular progress in the arts—at a period when almost all the nations of the earth were sunk in ignorance and barbarism. It must, therefore, without doubt, appear extraordinary that, with all these advantages, the character of this people was held extremely low, and even despisable among the contemporary nations of antiquity. This peculiarity may, perhaps, be traced up to a single cause. They were a people who chose to sequester themselves from the rest of mankind, and obstinately or fastidiously refused all correspondence with other nations. They were not known to them by their conquests; they had no connection with them by their commerce; and they had a rooted antipathy to the manners, and even to the persons of all strangers.

To illustrate the preceding observation: the Egyptians, properly speaking, were never a military people. The foreign conquests of Sesostris have been much vaunted by some of the ancient historians, and have in part at least, obtained credit with some of the moderns. It may, perhaps, appear a blamable degree of skepticism to doubt the reality of those distant expeditions of Sesostris altogether; yet for three reasons I should incline to that opinion. The first is, that such expeditions must have required such extensive armaments as the country of Egypt at no period of its history could ever have furnished. The army of Sesostris which he led into Asia is said to have amounted to 600,000 foot, 24,000 horse, and 27,000 armed chariots: a force which it may be boldly averred is ten times beyond what the narrow territory of Egypt could ever have maintained or equipped. Secondly, no reasonable motive could urge a sovereign of Egypt to adopt such projects of conquest, to which the national character of his people and their extraordinary prejudices must have offered the strongest resistence. And, lastly, it has never been pretended that the Egyptians gained the smallest accession of territory, or derived any advantage whatever from those prodigious conquests. In every authentic period of their history, the character of this African people has been feeble and unwarlike. They had a strong turn to the arts of peace; and sought to provide for that security which is favorable

to them, by keeping on foot a pretty numerous militia, for defence in case of invasion from other nations; but even this with little effect, for they were successively subdued, and enslaved by almost all the predominant powers of antiquity.

With regard to any intercourse with other nations by commerce, the Egyptians had so little genius of that sort, that while the Red Sea was left open to all the maritime nations who chose to frequent it, they would not suffer any of those foreign vessels to enter an Egyptian port. They had no ships of their own, for their country produced no timber fit for the construction even of the small boats employed in navigating the Nile, which obliged them to use baked earth for that purpose, and sometimes reeds covered with varnish. They held the sea in detestation, from a religious prejudice, and they avoided all intercourse with mariners. We may judge, then, with what probability the ancient writers tell us of the naval armament of Sesostris, consisting of 400 long ships of war. Whence came the timber, whence the skill to construct them, and whence the mariners to navigate them?

Towards the decline of the Egyptian monarchy, the sovereigns of that country began to pay some attention to commerce. Bocchoris, who reigned about 670 years before the Christian era, published, as Diodorus informs us, some very wise laws relative to that object; and in this he was imitated by some of the succeeding princes. Psammeticus, who lived about a century after him, encouraged foreign nations to resort to the Egyptian ports, and allowed some Greeks to form commercial settlements upon the coasts. Nechos, his successor, with the same view, attempted the renewal of a project, which is said to have been first conceived by Sesostris, of joining the Red Sea with the Mediterranean by a canal from one of the branches of the Nile; but this great work was not completed till 400 years afterwards, by Ptolemy Philadelphus.* The genius of Nechos was extremely opposite to the general character of his people. He is said to have equipped a fleet on the Red Sea, which he wisely manned with Phœnician navigators, with instructions to circumnavigate the continent of Africa, a voyage which we are told they accomplished in three years; a fact, which, considering the period of time (610 B. C.,) we need not add, is altogether incredible.

The singularity of the Egyptians with respect to manners, and their obstinate attachment to customs and practices, many of them repugnant to reason and the ordinary feelings of mankind, contributed more than any other cause to draw on them the aversion, and excite the ridicule of other nations. They had not only, as already remarked, an antipathy to all strangers; but some of their

* A part of this canal is still visible, running from Cairo to the north-east of the Berkel-el-Hadj, or, Lake of the Pilgrims, where it loses itself.

regulations seem calculated to encourage political disunion, and dislike to each other. All professions in Egypt were hereditary, a piece of policy which has received from some authors much encomium, but which deserves much more to be condemned than applauded. If the same dispositions and the same talents descended invariably from father to son, we might agree with M. Bossuet in holding it presumable, that men would execute in greater perfection what they had always seen done, and what had been their sole employment from infancy; but daily experience shows that neither talents nor inclinations are invariably hereditary, and therefore the argument is futile. But not only were all professions hereditary among this people; the rank and dignity of each was most scrupulously settled, nor could any eminence of merit, or of fortune, entitle an individual to higher respect or honor than what belonged to the meanest of his class; a policy repressive of all emulation, and of that generous ambition on which every species of excellence depends; while, at the same time, it was a fertile source of jealousy, animosity, and disunion.

Another species of the most pernicious policy among the Egyptians, which contributed not only to render them contemptible to other nations, but to foment discords among themselves, was the variety and difference of the objects of religious worship in the different provinces of the kingdom. The same animals that were regarded, in one province, with the most superstitious reverence, were, in another, the objects of detestation and abhorrence. In one quarter, they tamed the crocodiles, adorned them with gold and jewels, and worshipped them; in another, they killed those animals without mercy. In one province, the most sacred animal was a dog; in another, they reckoned dog's flesh the most delicate food. Cats were adored in one district, and rats in another. From these differences arose perpetual and violent animosities; for there are no contentions so rancorous as those which spring from the most trifling differences in religious worship or opinion. "The multitude," says Diodorus, "have been often inflamed into the highest pitch of fury, on account of the sacrilegious murder of a *divine cat.*"

The extravagant length to which the Egyptians carried their veneration for their consecrated animals exceeds all belief. The sacred crocodile, the dog, or the cat, were kept in an enclosed space set apart, adjoining to the temples dedicated to their worship. They were constantly attended by men of the highest rank, whose business was to provide them in the choicest victuals, which they were at pains to dress in the manner they supposed most agreeable to their palate. They washed them in warm baths, and anointed them with the richest perfumes. The finest carpets were spread for them to lie on: chains of gold and circlets of precious stones were hung around their legs and necks: and when the stupid animal, insensible of the honors that were bestowed on him,

died like the rest of his kind, the whole province was filled with lamentation; and not only the fortunes of the priests, but the public revenue was without scruple expended in the performance of the most sumptuous funeral obsequies.

It is not then to be wondered that the superstitions of the Egyptians were a copious subject of ridicule to other nations of antiquity, and contributed to degrade them in the opinion of those whose objects of religious worship, if not fundamentally more rational, were less ludicrous, less childish and unmanly. What could they think of a nation, where, as Herodotus tells us, if a house was on fire, the father of a family would take more pains to save his cats than his wife and children; where a mother would be transported with joy at the news of her child being devoured by a crocodile; or where the soldiers, returning from a military expedition, would come home loaded with a precious booty of dogs, cats, hawks, and vultures?

The general character of the Egyptians, with respect to morals, contributed likewise to draw upon them the disesteem of other nations. They have been generally accused by the ancients of great cunning and insincerity in their dealings. The term *Ægyptiare* (to play the Egyptian,) was proverbially used by the Greeks to signify *cozening* and *overreaching*. The contempt they expressed for strangers naturally stamped them with the character of a vain and insolent people. Pliny, in his Panegyric on Trajan, terms them *ventosa et insolens natio*. With respect to modesty and decorum, their manners were shamefully loose. In the festivals in honor of their gods, they committed such indecencies, that Herodotus, Diodorus, and others of the ancient writers, not over delicate themselves, have expressed a reluctance to enter into particular details.

Upon the whole, we may sum up in a few words the character of the Egyptians. They were a people remarkable for their early civilization, and for the systematic arrangement of their government and civil policy; though many of their particular institutions and usages were extremely faulty and impolitic. Their early subjection to laws, and their acquaintance with the arts and sciences, attracted the admiration of other nations, who, at first, inferior to them in those particulars, and instructing themselves from their acquirements, came afterwards to outstrip them very far in the same departments. Their contemptible vanity, which persuaded them that they had attained in every thing the summit of excellence, and their disdaining to borrow from or imitate the practices of other nations, sufficiently account for the small degree of improvement in those arts and sciences of which they were the inventors, and for their never advancing beyond the point of mediocrity. The character of their mind was feeble; they had no emulation, no ardor of enterprise, no ambition of extending their dominion over nations whom they despised, or of holding inter-

course with them in the way of commerce. The hatred and contempt which they entertained for others was returned tenfold upon themselves, for there is no debt so certainly and so liberally repaid as contempt; and hence we may reasonably suspect exaggeration in the picture which the ancient writers have drawn of their manners and morals. Under the influence of this caution, I have endeavored to describe them with impartiality, and believe I have assigned them as much merit as they truly deserve. I shall remark, in its proper place, the strong resemblance which, in many points, they bear to an Asiatic nation, known to Europeans only in modern times—I mean the Chinese.

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## CHAPTER V.

Of the Phenicians—Alphabetic Writing—Sanchoniatho—Navigation—Tyre.

Among the ancient nations who first showed a considerable degree of civilization and advancement in the useful arts, the Phœnicians deserve particular notice. It seems to rest on as good authority as can be brought for the origin of any of the useful arts, that it is to this eastern people that the world is indebted for the invention of writing, and for the first attempts at commercial navigation. I do not think the hypothetical reasoning of M. de Voltaire has much weight when he argues that this people, being the earliest nation which practised commerce, must have first found the expediency of using certain arbitrary characters for the purpose of carrying on their traffic, and keeping regular accounts. The Mexicans and Peruvians were acquainted with navigation, and practised commerce, and were, in other respects, highly polished and refined; yet they knew nothing of writing. The fact of the Phœnicians having very early attained to the use of writing seems to rest on better evidence than hypothetical reasoning. It seems to be agreed among the best informed writers, that the fragments of Sanchoniatho, though their antiquity has been vaunted by Porphyry and Philo considerably beyond the truth, are yet to be regarded as the composition of the earliest of the profane writers, and of a much more ancient date than any works of a Greek author. Sanchoniatho is generally supposed to have been contemporary with Joshua, who died 1443 years before the birth of Christ,

and about 500 years before the cities of Attica were united under Theseus. What remains of the works of this author are some fragments preserved by Eusebius, which were translated from the Phœnician language into Greek by Philo of Byblos. They give an account of the genealogy of the Phœnician gods; of Cœlus and of Saturn, and other deities afterwards adopted by the Greeks; and of the cosmogony or origin of the world;—accounts which Sanchoniathe says he collected from the most ancient historical monuments. The authenticity of those fragments has been questioned, and they have been supposed to have been forged by Porphyry from enmity to the Christian religion, and a desire to show that the pagans could boast of writings of equal antiquity with the Books of Moses. But it has been well observed, in answer to this supposition, that if Porphyry, or any other person, had made the forgery for such a purpose, they would not have fabricated a mass of nonsense and absurdity, which would throw ridicule and contempt on the system it was meant to support. Holding those fragments, therefore, as authentic, they prove that alphabetic writing was in use among the Phœnicians many ages before the Greeks had the smallest acquaintance with it.*

To the Phœnicians, all antiquity has joined in attributing the invention of navigation; or, at least, it seems an agreed point that they were the earliest among the nations of antiquity who made voyages for the sake of commerce. The Canaanites (for it is by that name that the Phœnicians are known in Scripture) were a powerful people in the days of Abraham. Their situation, occupying a narrow country on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean, and confined on all quarters towards the land by the surrounding tribes, naturally induced them to turn their attention to navigation. In the days of Abraham, we learn with some certainty that they had sailed to the coast of Greece; for Inachus, whose daughter Io they carried off from that country, is generally supposed contemporary with Abraham. When we come down to the time of the Hebrew Judges, we find the Phœnicians so far advanced as a commercial people as to be able to send colonies to distant quarters, and to form settlements for trade both on the European and Asiatic coasts. Among their first settlements were those of Cyprus and Rhodes. They then passed into Greece, into Sicily, and Sardinia, and thence into the southern parts of Spain. They did not confine their voyages to the Mediterranean Sea, but, passing the straits, established themselves in the Isle of Gades, and built a settlement anciently named Gadir, now Cadiz. Stretching southwards from the straits, they formed settlements

* See Goguet's elaborate Dissertation on the Origin of Alphabetic Writing, "Orig. des Loix," t. i. l. ii. c. vi., and a Dissertation on Sanchoniatho, by the same author, annexed to the first volume of the same work.

likewise on the western coast of Africa. Strabo informs us that they had made those settlements a short time after the Trojan war.

Sidon and ancient Tyre were among the most illustrious of the cities of antiquity. The latter owed its origin to a colony of the former, and does not seem to have existed in the days of Homer, who makes frequent mention of Sidon, but says nothing of Tyre. In the book of Joshua, Sidon is denominated *the great*; and the triumph of the Israelites, under that illustrious leader, which dispersed the Sidonians, was probably the occasion of their founding the city of Tyre, and transplanting themselves likewise into distant colonies. Among these, the most illustrious was Carthage, which came afterwards to be the most formidable rival of the Roman power; and which, of all the nations whom they finally subdued and overwhelmed, was the only one which had seriously threatened their own destruction.

Carthage was founded by Dido, the daughter of Belus, king of Tyre, 869 years before Christ, and 117 before the foundation of Rome by Romulus. The outlines of its history we shall afterwards briefly consider, when, in the course of the Roman history, we come to treat of the Punic wars.

Ancient Tyre seems to have risen to very great splendor within a short time from its foundation, and to have surpassed its parent state in opulence and extensive commerce. From the writings of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the other prophets, we must judge that it was in their time one of the greatest and wealthiest cities of the universe;* and the profane historians accord in this respect with the sacred. Its prosperity, however, was of no long duration. The city was besieged in the year 580 before Christ, by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and after a most obstinate resistance was taken in the thirteenth year of the siege, and utterly destroyed by the conqueror. The greatest part of the inhabitants had saved themselves by flight during this protracted war; and they built afterwards the city of New Tyre on an island at no great distance from the site of the ancient; a city which rivalled the former in magnitude and splendor, and the capture of which, by Alexander the Great (332 B. C.) after a siege of seven months, was one of the most brilliant exploits of that mighty conqueror.

The Tyrians were extremely industrious in the practice of many of the useful arts. They carried the working of metals to great perfection. The magnificence of the temple of Hercules at Tyre is celebrated by Herodotus, (l. ii., cap. xliv.) who saw it, and who was particularly struck with two columns, one of molten gold

* Isaiah wrote 768 years B. C., Jeremiah about 200 years afterwards; Ezekiel prophesied about 595 B. C. See Ezek. c. xxvii. and xxviii., where the wealth and commerce of Tyre are described in very glowing colors, and the particulars of its trade and manufactures minutely specified.

and the other of emerald, which in the night-time shone with great splendor. The latter was probably of colored glass, as we have the authority of Pliny for attributing to the Phœnicians the invention of the making of glass; and M. Goguet conjectures, with some plausibility, that the column was hollow, and was lighted by a lamp put within it. The Tyrian purple is celebrated by all the ancient authors. The color was the pure juice of a particular kind of shell-fish, and being produced in very small quantities, came thence to be of great value. The moderns are not unacquainted with the fish, but make no use of it, as a richer color is produced at much less expense from the cochineal insect.

The Tyrian merchants were probably the first who imported to the Mediterranean, and thence into Europe, the commodities of India. They wrested from the Idumæans some commodious ports upon the Arabian Gulf, from which they had a regular intercourse with India; and having occupied Rhinocorura in the Lower Egypt, which is the nearest port in the Mediterranean to the Arabian Gulf, they had a short and commodious land carriage for their Indian merchandise, till it was thence re-shipped, and conveyed to Tyre.*

## CHAPTER VI.

THE GRECIAN HISTORY.—Earliest period of the History of Greece.—The Titans.—Cecrops.—Chronicle of Paros.—Areopagus.—Deluge of Deucalion.—Council of the Amphictyons.—Cadmus.—Introduction of Letters.

THE History of Greece presents to an inquisitive mind a various and most instructive field of speculation; and happily, from that period when its annals become truly important, its history has been written by very able authors. The early antiquities of this country are, it is true, so disguised with fables, that it is extremely difficult to discover the truth. Yet, in order to understand and profit by the classical writers, especially the poets, it is necessary to have some acquaintance even with those fables; and we know with considerable precision the period when they cease to mix themselves with facts, and when authentic history commences.

* See a clear and rational account of the origin of the trade between Egypt, Arabia, and India, in Bruce's Travels, b. ii. ch. i.

This respectable people was not free from the common vanity of nations, of attributing to itself a measure of antiquity far beyond all bounds of probability. The Athenians, indeed, in terming themselves *Αυτοχθονες*, seemed to claim for their own nation an antiquity coeval with the formation of the earth; which was just as allowable as the boast of the Arcadians, that they were *προσελήνοι*, or *older than the moon*. But whatever was the origin of the ancient inhabitants of this country, it is certain, that till civilized in some measure by colonies of the Eastern nations who settled among them, they were in a state of the rudest barbarism. The aboriginal Greeks, under their various denominations of Pelasgi, Aones, Hiantes, Leleges, &c., were a race of savages who dwelt in caverns, and are said to have been so barbarous, as to live without any subordination to a chief or leader, to have fed on human flesh, and to have been ignorant of the use of fire. The most ancient colony from the East that are said to have established themselves among these barbarians are the Titans, a band of adventurers from Phœnicia or the adjoining coasts, who are generally supposed to have come thither about the time of Abraham. We have already seen that the Phœnicians were at this time a commercial people, trading to all the coasts of the Mediterranean; but it is evident that no views of commerce could have been their inducement to settle among a race of savages. It seems therefore probable that the fertility of the country had attracted those strangers thither, and that, availing themselves of those advantages which their superior knowledge and improvements gave them over the rude inhabitants, they, partly by policy, and partly by conquest, made themselves masters of the country. At all events, it is universally allowed that, from the period of those strangers settling among them, the Greeks assumed a new character, and exhibited in some respects the manners of a civilized nation. The dawnings of a national religion began to appear; for the Titans were a religious people. They taught the savages to worship the Phœnician gods, Ouranos, Saturn, Jupiter, &c., who were nothing more than deified heroes; and by a progress of ideas not unnatural, this rude people confounded in after times those gods with the Titans who introduced them. The feats and achievements of the Titans, and those wars which had taken place among them, were believed to have been the exploits and wars of the gods. Hence sprung the greatest part of the Greek mythology, and the numberless fables regarding their gods and demi-gods.

The Titans seem to have been a turbulent people; they weakened themselves by their incessant quarrels and hostile conflicts, and at length entirely extirpated each other. The last of the race was Inachus, who is looked upon as the founder of the kingdom of Argos. The city of Argos was built 1856 B. C., by his son Phoroneus, and the kingdom of Sicyon founded by another of them. Contemporary with him was Ogyges, king of Attica, in

whose time, about 1796 B. C., is said to have happened that remarkable inundation which goes by the name of the Deluge of Ogyges. As from the time of Ogyges to that of Cecrops there is no series recorded of the kings of Attica, nor any connected history of that period—this chasm in the annals of the nation has been by some writers ascribed to the ravages of that deluge, by which it is said the country was depopulated, and lay waste for above two centuries: but this fact is not supported by any proofs, while on the other hand, the best-informed authors regard the deluge of Ogyges as nothing more than a partial exuberance from an extraordinary overflowing of the lake Copais, in Bœotia, which overspread but a part of the low country, while the rest continued to be inhabited.

This emergence of the Greeks from barbarism, which they owed to the Titans, was only of very short duration. They soon relapsed into their former savage state; a circumstance which accounts, without the aid of a deluge, for the total silence of the history of this people for a period above 200 years, till they were again illuminated by another colony of strangers from the eastern shores of the Mediterranean. At the head of this second colony was Cecrops, who, about 1582 years B. C., is supposed to have landed in Attica, where there was a species of government under Actæus, but so feebly enforced, that the whole country was the prey of pirates and robbers. It was pillaged on the land side by the Œones, a people of Bœotia, and by the Carians on the quarter of the sea. Cecrops marrying the daughter of Actæus, succeeded to the sovereignty, and taught his subjects the most effectual way of resisting these violences, by associating together in small communities, and thus uniting their strength. He built several cities in Attica, and is celebrated as an able politician and legislator. Cities we may suppose were, at this time, a collection of huts like an Indian village; and political regulations extended no further than to enforce obedience to the chief, and union among the tribe; to define property, and to give it some small degree of security.

Dark and uncertain as the history of Greece is at this period, we must observe that it begins to have a degree of authenticity from a very singular and venerable monument of antiquity, the Chronicle of Paros, which is preserved among the collection of marbles brought from Smyrna by the Earl of Arundel, and now the property of the University of Oxford.

This Chronicle of Paros contains a precious memorial of history and of chronology, and fixes the eras of many facts left uncertain by the Greek writers. Not, however, that it can be pretended that there arises from this chronicle the same certainty that would arise from particular records coeval with the facts; for this monument is only the testimony of an author relating facts which had happened many ages before his own time. But, in the first place, he is a very ancient author; and, secondly, his chronicle being

recorded on marble, it is probable that it was cut by public authority, and upon the evidence of anterior monuments. A proof of its antiquity arises from the circumstance of the dates being marked by a very ancient method of numeration, which Herodian mentions as being in use among the Greeks in the early ages. The numerical letters, instead of proceeding in the order of the alphabet, are the first letters of the numerical word; as Π for Πεντε, five; Δ for Δεκα, ten—&c. An argument of the veracity and authenticity of the chronicle arises from this circumstance, that in the whole course of events there recorded, there is no particular which has the air of fiction. It was the poets only who intermixed history with fable: the genuine monuments of history seem to have been preserved pure and unadulterated, making allowance only for what the credulity of rude and ignorant times might adopt for truth, and which increasing knowledge has rejected as fabulous. In this chronicle we have the era and duration of the siege of Troy, but none of the marvelous circumstances with which that event has been embellished by Homer. Mention is likewise made of Ceres, of Hercules, of Mars, and Neptune, but no fabulous exploits are recorded of them. A great deal of authority seems, therefore, deservedly due to this chronicle, which marks the dates of the principal events of the Grecian history, from the reign of Cecrops down to the age of Alexander the Great. Time and accident have mutilated both the beginning and the end of this monument, from which, if entire, we might probably have learned both the precise time when it was constructed, and the evidence of anterior monuments from which the dates were taken; but of these important circumstances we must be content to remain in ignorance.

Resting, then, upon the authority of this venerable monument, we may credit all the principal facts which are recorded even in the earliest part of this period; while we receive with a proper degree of skepticism those circumstances detailed by the ancient writers which have the air of fable, and which are not to be found in this chronicle.

Cecrops died childless, and was succeeded by Cranaus, an Athenian, in whose time happened two remarkable events, both recorded in the Chronicle of Paros—the judgment of the court of Areopagus, between Mars and Neptune, two princes of Thessaly —and the Deluge of Deucalion.

Hallirothius, the son of Neptune, had violated Alcippe, the daughter of Mars, and her father put him to death in revenge for the injury. To avoid a war which would have ensued between these princes on occasion of this quarrel, their difference was submitted to the judgment of the Areopagus, which decreed that the revenge of Mars was justified by the outrage which he had sustained. This celebrated tribunal had been instituted by Cecrops, and soon arose to such reputation, that strangers, and even the

sovereigns of other countries, sometimes submitted their most important differences to its decision.

The number of its judges is variously reported by historians. Some writers have limited it to nine; others have enlarged it to thirty-one, and some to fifty-one: whence it is probable that the number has been different at different periods. They were chosen from among the wisest and most respectable of the citizens, and, in the latter times, consisted principally of such as had enjoyed the dignity of archons or chief magistrates. They held their meetings in the open air, upon an eminence in the middle of the city, and determined all causes during the night; for these two reasons, as Athenæus informs us, that neither the number nor the faces of the judges being known, there might be no attempts to corrupt them: and that, as they neither saw the plaintiff nor defendant, their decisions might be quite impartial. To these reasons the President Goguet adds a third, that as they sat in the open air, their proceedings would have been constantly embarrassed by the crowd which would perpetually have attended them, had they met in the day-time. Of the powers of this high tribunal, and the nature of its jurisdiction, I shall treat more particularly when I come to consider the constitution of the Athenian republic.

The other remarkable event which distinguished the age of Cranaus, the successor of Cecrops, was the Deluge of Deucalion. There is no event more celebrated in antiquity than this remarkable inundation. Deucalion is feigned by the poets to have been the restorer of the human race, and was in all probability the parent stock of a very numerous progeny in Greece. But the deluge which happened in his time was certainly nothing more than another partial inundation, like the deluge of Ogyges, caused by the overflowing of some of the Thessalian rivers, probably the Peneus. That this deluge was only partial is proved by this fact, that the succession of the sovereigns in the different states of Greece preceding the age of Deucalion is preserved, as well as the series of those who came after his time. History shows no chasm in the succession of the kings of Argos, Athens, or Sicyon, which must have taken place had the deluge been universal. The Chronicle of Paros gives its aid in confirmation of this idea; for it records that Deucalion, after escaping from the flood, retired to Athens, where he sacrificed to Jupiter Phyxius. The poets have embellished this event with a variety of circumstances extremely similar to those we find in the Mosaiac accounts of the universal deluge; but this proves no more than that these authors had either seen the sacred writings, whence they had borrowed those circumstances, or else that the tradition of that great event being very generally diffused, they had applied its circumstances to an inundation which was merely topical, and long posterior to the other, though still a very ancient event with reference to the age in which those authors wrote. Those partial inundations were

extremely common in Greece. Xenophon reckons no less than five of them, and Diodorus Siculus mentions a sixth, posterior to those enumerated by Xenophon.

Contemporary with Cranaus was Amphictyon, who reigned at Thermopylæ,—a prince of great and comprehensive views, if in reality Greece owed to him that excellent political institution of the council of the Amphictyons; but I should rather incline to be of another opinion. The state of Greece was at this time so rude, and the country broken into so many independent sovereignties, that we can hardly suppose any single prince to have had sufficient influence to bring about a league of twelve states or cities with their dependencies, and to make them adopt one common interest. The institution was certainly ancient, but more probably owed its origin to some national emergency which made the northern districts of Greece sensible of the necessity of combining their power and uniting their interests. The name *Ἀμφικτύονες*, accordingly to its original orthography, makes this conjecture, which is the notion of Suidas, more probable. It is more natural to suppose the council was so named as being *composed of deputies from all the cities around*, than that it took its appellation from a prince of the name of Amphictyon, of whose history we know nothing else than this alleged remarkable fact.

The states united in this general council were the Ionians, among whom were comprehended the Athenians; the Dorians; the Perrhebians; the Bœotians; Magnesians; Achæans; Pthians; Melians; Dolopians; Ænianians; Dryopians; and Phocians. They met twice in the year at Thermopylæ, and afterwards at Delphi; two deputies attending from each state; and in their deliberations and resolutions all were on a footing of equality. Limited at first to twelve separate republics, this council came afterwards to include the whole of the Grecian states, according as the principal or leading republics acquired territories belonging to any of the Amphictyonic cities, and thus came to have a voice in the general council. Thus the Lacedæmonians becoming masters of the territory of Doris, had their deputies in this council, from which in their own right they were excluded. Hence the assembly of the Amphictyons, from being at first a partial league of twelve cities, became a convention of all the states of Greece. The deputies sent thither represented the body of the people, and had full powers to deliberate and to form resolutions on all that regarded the common interest of the combined states.* The principle of this association

* The nature of the powers supposed to be resident in this council, and the grievances against which it was intended chiefly to provide a remedy, may be gathered from the oath taken by the deputies, as we find it recorded in the oration of Æschines *de Fals. Legat.*:—"I swear that I will never subvert any Amphictyonic city; I will never stop the courses of their water, either in war or peace. If any such outrages should be attempted, I will oppose them by

cannot be sufficiently commended. It made all the leading men of the several states of Greece personally known to each other, and led to a communication of every sort of knowledge and improvement. It had a powerful effect in civilizing a rude nation, and repressing those petty feuds between its separate cantons, and that encroaching and predatory spirit, so common in such a state of society, and so hostile to all advancement and general prosperity. Without some such bond of union, Greece, from the nature of its separate governments, could never have formed a considerable power in the scale of the nations of antiquity, nor ever have withstood the force of such formidable enemies as we shall see she had to encounter.

Contemporary with this real or fabulous Amphictyon was Cadmus, who, about 1519 years before the Christian era, is said to have imported into Phœnicia into Greece the art of alphabetic writing. The Phœnician alphabet, which is generally supposed to be the root of all the others, consisted only of sixteen letters, and the ancient Greeks had no more for many centuries afterwards. Before the introduction of the Phœnician alphabet by Cadmus, it is probable that the Greeks used either the hieroglyphic mode, or the more ancient manner of expressing their ideas by rude pictures. The word *Γραφειν* being used to signify either to *write* or to *paint*, countenances this supposition. After the introduction of the alphabetic mode, the Greeks wrote, not as afterwards, constantly from left to right, but alternately from left to right and from right to left. This mode of writing, of which there are some specimens preserved among the Arundelian marbles at Oxford, was termed *Boustrophedon*, from its resemblance to the furrows described in ploughing a field.

With the art of writing, Cadmus brought likewise from Phœnicia a knowledge of all those arts and sciences which were practised and cultivated at this time in that early civilized country. The Greeks gradually advancing in improvement, and shaking off their original barbarism, begin, from this period, to figure as an united people, and to turn their thoughts, as we shall presently see, to ambitious and hazardous enterprises. But, before proceeding to notice these, I shall here take occasion to offer a few reflections on the short preceding sketch of the first and rudest period of the Grecian history.

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force of arms, and do my endeavors to destroy those cities which are guilty of such attempts. If any devastations be committed in the territory of Apollo, if any shall be privy to such offence, or entertain any design against the temple, I will use my hands, my feet, my whole force to bring the offender to just punishment." The latter part of the oath was intended as a guard upon the purity of the national religion; and this care was always understood to form a very important part of the function of the Amphictyonic council. This oath was guarded by the most dreadful curses and awful imprecations of vengeance upon any deputy who should violate the obligations which he thus came under.

## CHAPTER VII.

Reflections on the first and rudest periods of the Grecian History.—Extreme Barbarism of the Aborigines—Circumstances which retarded Civilization—Origin of the Greek Theology—Discovery of Mythological Researches.—Superstitious Character of the Greeks—Oracles—Games—Effects of them on the National Character.

THE topographical appearance of the country of Greece, when surveyed upon a map, presents to the view a large irregular peninsula, surrounded on the east, south, and west, by the Mediterranean, which deeply indents its coasts, and divided internally by several large chains of mountains, which, with their lateral branches, form so many intersections, that the whole face of the country appears cut into a great number of small valleys, surrounded almost on every side by hills. Hence, while the coasts of the peninsula formed a multitude of bays and harbors, easily accessible to strangers who came thither with a view either to colonize or to make spoil, it must have been extremely difficult for those invaders to penetrate into the interior parts of the country; and troops of an enemy, after the conquest of one canton, would find fresh difficulties, and a war to recommence, at every step of their progress. From the same cause, the internal structure of the country, it would necessarily happen, that even after a colony of strangers had formed a permanent establishment, and begun to spread improvement and civilization around them, the progress of that civilization would be extremely slow. For the inhabitants of the different cantons living altogether detached, and feeling very few wants to incite to intercourse or to union, any improvement which they received would be partial, and very slowly communicated to their neighboring provinces. The conformity, indeed, of the language of the Greeks, would seem to countenance the notion of their having free communication and intercourse; but this general conformity may be accounted for from their having all the same origin; and if the original language was the same, it must, in such a state of barbarism, have long remained without much change, even though the different districts of the country had no intercourse with each other.

And here it may be remarked, that the admirable structure of the Greek language, highly complicated, yet at the same time

wonderfully regular, and at once the most copious and most elegant of the known tongues, is of itself a proof of that tradition which attributes the first civilization of this people to a colony of strangers from one or other of the more polished countries of the East: for this language, such as we find it to have been in the days of Homer and of Hesiod, is a phænomenon altogether inconsistent with the state of society in which it is found, and with the rude and barbarous manners of the people who used it. It must, therefore, have been imported and taught to this people by the colony of a refined and polished nation among whom it had its birth.

That the ancient inhabitants of this peninsula were rude and uncultivated savages, is a fact which the moderns have no reasonable grounds for doubting, when we find it the uniform belief of the nation itself in all periods of its annals, and the common opinion of its best historians. "Who could imagine," says M. Goguet, "that that ingenious people to whom Europe is indebted for all its knowledge, were descended from savages who wandered in the woods and wilds, without laws or leaders, having no other retreat but dens and caverns, ignorant even of the use of fire, and so barbarous as even to eat one another?" Why should we doubt of these facts, when we know for a truth that other nations, in times comparatively modern, were upon their first discovery found in a state equally barbarous? The inhabitants of the Marian Islands, when they were discovered by Magellan in 1521, had, till that time, never seen fire, and expressed the utmost astonishment at it. They believed it to be an animal which fixed itself upon wood and fed upon it, and when approaching so near as to be burnt, they thought they were bit by it. The inhabitants of the Philippine and Canary Islands were, at their first discovery, in a state of equal ignorance. There are, it is true, but few countries in which lightning is not seen at times, and its effects perceived; but as those effects are always destructive, a savage would naturally regard the phenomenon with horror: and if a similar effect should by chance manifest itself from the collision of hard substances, he would not readily conceive that it could be turned to useful purposes; and, therefore, instead of preserving the fire, would naturally either endeavor to suppress and extinguish it, or, if he found that impracticable, would fly from it and leave it to its ravages.

That the ancient inhabitants of Greece were *anthropophagi* is no more incredible, than that there are savage tribes at this day in Asia, Africa, and America, who make a common practice of feeding on human flesh.* We think of this with horror, and execrate

* The New Zealanders, beyond doubt, are cannibals. — See *Hawkesworth and Cooke's last Voyage in* 1777. They eat, however, only their enemies, and expressed great abhorrence when asked if they eat their friends who had been killed. — [See also Earle's *Residence in New-Zealand*, 1833.—Ellis's *Polynesian Researches*, 1829—and Sir Stamford Raffles *on Java*.]

the idea as shocking and unnatural. We, who do not know what it is to want the supplies of a vast variety of aliment, study to excite the satiated appetite by skilful combinations and ingenious refinements of cookery: but we should judge more impartially, if, while we thought of those bloody repasts, we took likewise into view the ungodly provision which nature in many regions of the earth has made for man: the barren deserts which he inhabits, the climate which often locks up or annihilates their scanty produce, and the dreadful extremities to which even civilized man has been known to proceed for the support of life. Necessity only, in the most savage nations, could at first get the better of the strongest instinct; but that once overcome, a habit is soon acquired, and will not be laid aside as long as subsistence remains in any degree precarious.

In a nation so barbarous as we must believe Greece to have been at this period, there were many circumstances which retarded the advances to refinement.

The Titans, the first colony of strangers from the East, might have introduced a degree of civilization, but it could be only temporary. They taught the Greeks agriculture: but the continual wars in which they were engaged among themselves rendered the improvement of the country quite impracticable, for no man had any security for reaping the fruits of his labor. These strangers were exterminated, and Greece, in a few years, relapsed into her original barbarism. The second and third colonies from the East founded a few cities, then termed kingdoms; for every city was a separate state, and we may form a judgment of the nature of these states from this circumstance, that at the time of Cecrops, when Attica consisted of twelve separate states or cities, the inhabitants of the whole district amounted only to 20,000.

The detached situation of the Greeks, of which we have already taken notice, and the natural barriers between the different cantons, gave to the inhabitants a certain spirit of independence, which, even after the foundation of a political union, would very much resist all attempts towards the establishment of general laws, and, consequently, afford the greatest obstacles to general civilization. One powerful engine, best fitted to overcome these obstacles, was the introduction of a national religion, which Greece, as we have already observed, owed to those eastern colonies.

It is a very just remark of an ingenious historian,* that the theology of any country is an indication of the state of manners when that system was first formed. "By knowing the adventures and attributes of any false deity, we can pronounce with some certainty what must have been the state of society and manners when he was elevated to that dignity. The mythology of Greece plainly

* Robertson's Historical Disquisition concerning India, Appendix, p. 317.

indicates the character of the age in which it was formed. It must have been in times of the greatest licentiousness, anarchy, and violence, that divinities of the highest rank could be supposed capable of perpetrating actions, or of being influenced by passions, which, in more enlightened periods, would be deemed a disgrace to human nature: it must have been when the earth was still infested with destructive monsters, and mankind, under forms of government too feeble to afford them protection, were exposed to the depredations of lawless robbers, or the cruelty of savage oppressors, that the well-known labors of Hercules, by which he was raised from earth to heaven, could have been necessary, or would have been deemed highly meritorious."

What was the original worship of the ancient inhabitants of this country we are entirely at a loss to know; but barbarous as they were, they probably had some notions of religion, and receiving from strangers a new system of theology, of which at first their ideas must have been very confused, they would naturally graft the one upon the other: as we know that in modern times several savage nations have done in blending their own idolatries with the tenets of Christianity. Hence if we still trace the gods of the Phœnicians and of the Egyptians in those of the Greeks, with respect to the great characterizing circumstances of their powers and attributes, it is a very fruitless labor which some learned men have undertaken in attempting to prove a coincidence in all the minute particulars of their fabulous lives, exploits, and metamorphoses. I know of no subject which has afforded so much disquisition, or so many opposite opinions, as the attempts that have been made to reconcile the mythologies of different nations, or to trace up all the absurd fables of the pagan theologies to one common origin. It would be idle to enter deeply into a subject of this nature: yet I think it of consequence to take notice at least of one theory or system with regard to the origin of the pagan mythologies which some very good men have adopted, from a mistaken zeal in the cause of religion. Some of these authors, with wonderful learning, but with much indiscretion, have attempted to show that most of the fables regarding the heathen deities and their illustrious exploits derive their origin from the sacred Scriptures, and are nothing else than the lives and actions of the first patriarchs vitiated and disguised in passing by tradition to barbarous and unenlightened nations. Thus the learned Bochart finds out the patriarch Noah in the pagan Saturn, his son Shem in Pluto, Ham in Jupiter Ammon, and Japhet in Neptune.* Moses alone is said to have furnished the idea of Apollo, Esculapius, Priapus, Prometheus, Tiresias, Proteus, Typhon, Perseus, Orpheus, Janus, Adonis; because certain fabulous exploits, attributed

* Bochart, Thomassin, Cumberland, Vossius, Huet, Fourmont, &c.

to those deities and heroes, bear a resemblance to some of the actions of the Jewish legislator. In like manner they have found all the heathen goddesses in Zipporah, the wife, or in Miriam, the sister, of Moses. One of these learned authors has published a book which he calls *Homer Hebraizing*, in which he alleges that the Iliad and Odyssey are nothing else than a history of the illustrious characters in Scripture under borrowed names. This fondness for reducing all history of remote antiquity to the sacred Scriptures, and of making the inspired volumes furnish theology not only to the Jews, but to all the heathen nations, is of very pernicious consequence; for what indeed else is it than to say, that the sacred oracles, designed to instruct mankind in their highest interests, and the covenants of their eternal welfare, have produced, in most nations, the wildest and most monstrous fictions, which are destructive even of morality, and persuade to vice instead of virtue?

The extreme uncertainty of all mythological explanations of the ancient fables is best evinced by comparing together the different solutions which men of ingenuity have given of the same fable. This, no doubt, is a digression: but nothing is useless which illustrates the history of the human mind. The story of Proteus feeding his sea-calves upon the beach, and counting them at noon, with the extraordinary faculty he had of varying his shape, is explained by the Abbé Banier into an historical fact of a king of Egypt of that name, who is said to have lived about the time of the war of Troy; "a wise and crafty prince," says Banier, "whose cautious temper, guarding him against all dangers, might well pass for the gift of prophecy which is ascribed to him. As it must have been extremely difficult to learn his secrets, there was no impropriety in saying that it was impossible to come at the knowledge of them but by binding him. He was, besides, exceedingly stately, and seldom appeared in public, unless about noon to review his soldiers, which the poets have called counting his flock: and as his subjects, the Egyptians, lived upon the sea-coasts, they were very properly termed sea-calves." Such is the account of Proteus by the Abbé Banier, which, it must be owned, is much less extravagant than many of his explanations. It were easy to contrast this with at least half a dozen different explanations of the same fable by other mythologists, all of them opposite to each other, all equally plausible, or, as some perhaps may think, equally absurd. But I shall content myself here with giving one other explanation of the same fable, by a genius of a superior order, I mean my Lord Bacon, a man whose vigor of imagination was perhaps his most eminent talent; and which, though in general it was under the chastisement of a most solid judgment, seems at times to have eluded the watchfulness of its monitor, and to have escaped into the regions of extravagance. He, too, was fond of discovering in the ancient mythology a great

deal of mysterious and secret wisdom; but its meaning lie for the most part so very deep, that it is extremely improbable they should ever have occurred to any but himself, much less to those who devised the fables.

The fable of Proteus, says Lord Bacon, seems to point at the secrets of nature, and the various state of matter. "Proteus, an old man, signifies matter, the most ancient of all things after God himself, which resides as in a quire, under the vast concavity of the heavens. He is represented as the servant of Neptune, because the various operations and modifications of matter are wrought chiefly while it is in a fluid state. The herd or flock of Proteus seems to mean nothing else than the several kinds of animals, plants, and minerals, in which matter appears to culture and spend itself: so that, after having formed these several species, and as it were finished its task, it seems to repose, as Proteus, after counting his flock, is feigned to go to sleep. But Proteus, when any attempts were made to bind him, is said to have changed into many different shapes: so matter, if any skilful artist should apply force, and torture it in order to its annihilation, will change and transform itself into a strange variety of shapes and appearances, but nothing less than the power of the Creator can annihilate or truly destroy it. So, at length, running through the whole circle of transformations, and completing its period, it in some degree restores itself, if the force be continued. The prophetical spirit of Proteus agrees excellently with the nature of matter; for he who knows the properties, the changes, and the processes of matter, must of necessity understand the effects and sum of what it does, has done, and can do; though his knowledge extend not to all the parts and particulars thereof."

Such is the solution of the fable of Proteus by Lord Bacon: upon which I shall only remark, that if this fable had any hidden meaning whatever, it is highly improbable that it should have been such as could have occurred to no other but a man possessed of similar talents to those of its interpreter, a great philosophical genius, guided at times by an extravagant imagination.* The extreme subtilty and refinement of his solution must convince us at least that the parable could never have answered the end of instruction, which Lord Bacon himself supposes to have been the chief use and purpose of those ancient allegories. To dismiss the subject of mythology, I shall only observe, that researches of this kind, however ingenious, however they may exercise and amuse the imagination, are extremely fruitless. No subject requires more acquaintance with history, or demands more labor and re-

* Balzac says, humorously, "Croyons donc, pour l'amour du Chancelier Bacon, que toutes les folies des anciens sont sages, et tous leurs songes mystères."

search. But the annals of history are ransacked to very little purpose if we establish it for a principle that every extravagant whim or absurdity that was current in any age or nation must have had some foundation in reason. The more we are acquainted with the human mind, the more we shall perceive its weaknesses, its prejudices, its caprices, and its follies.

To return from this digression—the great engine of the civilization of the Greeks was the assimilation of a national religion by those eastern colonies: and, inspired with the enthusiasm of all new converts, it is no wonder that superstition was at this time their predominant characteristic. To this age, therefore, and to this character of the people, we must refer the origin of the Grecian oracles, and the institution of the public games in honor of the gods.

With a rude and unenlightened people there is no passion more strong than the desire of penetrating into futurity. It would seem that the less the human mind is aided by experience, or enabled from extensive knowledge to form probable conjectures of the future from the past, the more it is apt to wish for and to believe the possibility of some secret art or method of obtaining such anticipated views. All barbarous nations have their augurs, their sorcerers, or their oracles. The Canadian savages have in every tribe a few crafty impostors, who pretend to foretell future events by visions, which they have in their sleep, and who are thence termed *dreamers*. When the tribe marches to war, these dreamers constantly attend in the rear of the troop, and no measure is ventured upon till they are consulted. The African negroes have their *Obi* men and women, who deal in charms and incantations, and are firmly believed to have the power of dispensing good and evil fortune at their pleasure. The sorceries of the Laplander are well known; and the second-sight of the Scottish highlanders: all proceed from the same source, ignorance and superstition.

A cavern at the foot of Mount Parnassus, near Delphi, was remarkable for exhaling a mephitic vapor, which, like that of the Grotto del Cani in Italy, had the effect of stupefying and slightly convulsing any person who came within its atmosphere. Some ingenious men had the address to turn this natural phenomenon to their own advantage and the profit of the neighborhood. A temple was built on the spot to Apollo, the god of divination. A priestess was procured whom habit soon enabled to undergo the experiment without danger; the raving expressions which the priests probably instructed her to utter, and which they interpreted as they thought fit, were received by the people as oracles; and her visible convulsions gave ample testimony to their being the effect of inspiration. A hollow oak in the forest of Dodona, in which it was possible for a man to conceal himself while the aperture was artfully closed up, was likewise famous for its oracles, and the imposture was no doubt equally beneficial to its priests

and attendants. These were commonly men of some art, who had ingenuity enough to frame equivocal answers to the questions that were put to them; and if the inquirer gave such construction to the response as was most agreeable to himself, it was generally possible for the priests to construe it according to the event. Strange! that men should ever believe that if the Deity should stoop to hold intercourse with his creatures, he would use the mean tricks and subterfuges of a juggler.

Yet these oracles of the Greeks were for many ages in high reputation, and had extensive political consequence. One of the causes which have been assigned for the high reputation of the Amphictyonic Council, and the removal of its seat from Thermopylæ to Delphi, was the interest which the northern states of Greece had in maintaining the veneration for the Delphian oracle, and the preservation of the riches of its temple, with which this council was particularly entrusted. A more remarkable consequence was the institution of the *public games* of the Greeks. The concourse of people to the oracles upon particular occasions (for it was only at stated periods that they were accessible) naturally led to the celebration of a festival and to public games, which, as a religious motive first occasioned their celebration, began soon to be considered as a part of religion.

The celebration of public games was of very high antiquity among the Greeks. Homer makes no mention of the Olympian, or of any other of those which were called the sacred games; but is very ample in the account of the games celebrated in honor of the dead, in his account of the funeral of Patroclus, and describes minutely the several contests of chariot-races, foot-races, boxing, wrestling, throwing the quoit, launching the javelin, shooting with the bow, and fencing with the spear.* These games seem to have borne a considerable resemblance to the Gothic tournaments. The prizes were of considerable value—a female captive, a war-horse, golden goblets, spears, &c. These we shall see in after times gave place to such rewards as were purely honorary.

The four public, or solemn games of the Greeks, which were particularly termed ἱερὸι or sacred, were the Olympic, the Pythian, the Nemæan, and the Isthmian. The precise eras when those games were first instituted are extremely uncertain, as well as the persons to whom they owed their origin. With regard to both these points, Archbishop Potter, in his *Archæologia Græca*, has collected all the different opinions. The Olympic games, which were celebrated at Olympia in the territory of Ellis, were held every four years, or rather every fifteenth month, or the second month after the completion of four years. And hence have arisen the seeming chronological discordances, when events have been

* Iliad, 23.

computed both by years and by olympiads; for it has been customary to allow four precise years to an olympiad instead of fifty months. The Greeks did not begin to compute the time by olympiads, from the period when those games were first instituted. They had even subsisted some centuries before they began to reckon by them: and the first olympiad, according to Usher's chronology, begins only 776 years before the Christian era, 29 years before the Babylonian era of Nabonassar, and 149 before the building of Rome.

The amusements of the people in all these public games were of the same nature, and consisted principally in viewing contests of skill in all the athletic exercises. The prizes bestowed on the victors were not rewards of any intrinsic value, as those given at the ancient funeral games; they were originally of the most simple nature. A crown of wild olive or of parsley was accounted the highest reward in the times of virtuous simplicity, when glory was a sufficient incitement to excellence without the sordid allurements of interest; and so powerful is habit in its influence on the mind, that even in the later ages of Greece, when luxury had introduced corruption of every kind, the victors in those games had no other reward than a garland of leaves. In a political view, these public games were, during the first ages of their institution, of the most important consequence. Independently of their effect in promoting in the youth a lively and vigorous conformation of body, and that activity and address in martial exercises and in single combat, which, according to the ancient system of war, were of the utmost importance, a most beneficial consequence of those public games was the frequent assembling together of the inhabitants of all the states of Greece, and thus promoting a national union: to which the difference of their governments, and their separate interests, were otherwise opposing a constant resistance. Assembled on these public occasions from motives of pleasure and amusement, to which was joined the notion of performing a duty of religion, and indulging in every species of festivity, they could not avoid considering each other as brethren and fellow citizens. Whatever were the political interferences of the several states, or their national animosities, every grudge of this kind was at least for the time obliterated. Thucydides informs us that all hostile operations between states actually at war were suspended during the performance of those solemnities. Another consequence of those meetings was the dissemination of knowledge, arts, science, and literature; for it must be observed, that although the chief contests in the sacred games were those in the martial and athletic exercises, there were likewise trials of skill in poetry, history, and music: and it is chiefly to these latter exercises of genius that we must attribute the eminence of the Greeks in those sciences above all the nations of antiquity.

# CHAPTER VIII.

Early period of the Greek history continued—Earliest state of agriculture in Greece—Erectheus institutes the Eleusinian Mysteries—Obtains the sovereignty of Attica—Theseus unites the cities of Attica—This the age of the marvellous—End of that period—Expedition of the Argonauts—Course of their voyage—The solstitial and equinoctial points fixed by Chiron—This the foundation of Sir Isaac Newton's chronology—Twofold proof on which it rests—Progress of maritime affairs in Greece—State of the military art—War of Thebes—War of the *Epigoni*—War of Troy—Ancient system of warfare—The tactic or arrangement of their troops—Subsistence of the armies—Arms—The war of the *Heraclidæ*—Change of government in Greece—Commencement of the democracy of Athens—Origin of the Greek colonies—Causes of their rapid advancement.

From the period of the arrival of the first of those Eastern colonies which formed establishments in Greece, down to the era of the war of Troy, is an interval of above 300 years, in which the Greeks were gradually shaking off their original barbarism, and advancing in civilization and the knowledge of the arts of life. This whole space of time, however, is accounted the fabulous period of the Grecian history. Not that it contains no facts of which the authenticity can be relied on, but that it abounds with many, which, with a basis of truth, have served as the foundation for an immense superstructure of fable. Part of the history of this period I have given in the preceding chapter, in which I have shortly traced the progress of the Greeks from their most barbarous state down to the introduction of letters into Greece by Cadmus. I shall now throw together such facts as are tolerably well authenticated, and may be relied on as the great outlines of the history of what remains of that doubtful period down to the Trojan war. From that era, when it is generally allowed that fiction ceases to mix itself with authentic history, we shall proceed with a greater degree of light, and find the objects of our study gradually rising upon us in point of importance.

Greece, which is not naturally a fertile country, nourishing only a few inhabitants, and these seeking their sustenance, like other savages, from the woods and mountains, did not begin to practise agriculture till about 150 years after the time of Cecrops. At this time Erectheus, either a Greek who had sailed to Egypt, or the leader of a new colony of Egyptians, is said to have introduced agriculture into Attica, and to have relieved that country, then suffering from famine, by the importation of a large quantity of Egyptian grain. The only produce of the native soil at this time

was the olive, which served as a very nourishing food, but of which the various uses were then so little known that it has been doubted if, even in the days of Homer, the Greeks used oil for the purpose of giving light. It is certain that this great poet, who is abundantly minute in describing every circumstance of domestic life, never mentions oil as applied to that purpose.*

Erectheus, called by the latter Greeks Erichthonius, is said to have cultivated the plains of Eleusis, then a barren waste, and to have instituted, in honor of Ceres, the Eleusinian Mysteries, in imitation of the Egyptian games of Isis. Ceres is feigned to have come herself into Greece at this period; and the poets have recorded many prodigies of her performance. As to the precise nature of these Eleusinian mysteries, the moderns can only form conjectures; since, even among the ancients, they were kept an inviolable secret from all but those who were initiated. They certainly were of a religious and even of a moral nature; since we find the wisest among the ancients expressing themselves with regard to them in strains of the highest encomium. Cicero, speaking of them, says, [De Leg. l. 2.] "Among many other advantages which we have derived from Athens, this is the greatest; for it has improved a rude and barbarous people, instructed us in the art of civilized life, and has not only taught us to live cheerfully, but to die in peace in the hope of a more happy futurity." For a very learned conjectural explanation of those mysteries, we refer the reader to Bishop Warburton's *Divine Legation of Moses*; and many curious particulars regarding the actual ceremonies performed in those sacred solemnities are enumerated by Mr. Cumberland in his *Observer*, a work which contains a great deal of valuable research on various topics of the antiquities and literature of the Greeks.†

* Their apartments were lighted only by fires, and in the palaces of princes odoriferous wood was employed for that purpose.—Odyss. v. 59; Ibid. vi. 306. They likewise used torches of pine and resinous woods.—Odyss. xviii. 309.

† According to Mr. Cumberland, the Eleusinian mysteries were celebrated in the time of autumn, every fifth year, at Eleusis, where a great concourse of people met on the occasion. The ceremonies of initiation were preceded by sacrifices, prayers, and ablutions. The candidates were exercised in trials of secrecy, and prepared by vows of continence; every circumstance was contrived to render the act as awful and striking as possible; the initiation was performed at midnight, and the candidate was taken into an interior sacristy of the temple, with a myrtle garland on his head; here he was examined, if he had duly performed his stated ablutions; clean hands, a pure heart, and a native proficiency in the Greek tongue, were indispensable requisites. Having passed this examination, he was admitted into the temple, which was an edifice of immense magnitude: after proclamation made that the strictest silence should be observed, the officiating priest took out the sacred volumes containing the mysteries; these books were written in a strange character, interspersed with figures of animals, and various emblems and hieroglyphics; they were preserved in a cavity between two large blocks of stone, closely fitted to each other, and they were carefully replaced by the priest with much solemnity, after he had explained what was necessary to the initiated out of them. The

The services of Erechtheus were rewarded by his obtaining the sovereignty of Attica, which, from that time, began to advance in civilization; and in the succeeding age, during the reign of Theseus, the Greeks in general began to display an active and ambitious spirit, which signalized itself in some very extraordinary enterprises. Such were the expedition of the Argonauts under Jason; the war of Thebes, in which seven kings combined against Eteocles, its sovereign; and the war of Troy, which engaged all the states and princes of Greece.

Attica, before the time of Theseus, though under one sovereign, was divided into twelve districted states or cities, each governed by its own magistrates and laws. This prince laid the foundation of the greatness of Attica, by uniting these twelve states, combining their interests, and throwing them into one people. The separate magistracies were abolished, and the whole agreed to be governed by the same code of laws, in the framing of which the principal men of each state had an equal suffrage. Erechtheus had divided the citizens into four classes: Theseus reduced them to three—the nobles, the laborers, and the artisans. As the two last were the most numerous and the most powerful, he balanced that inequality, by conferring on the first the sole regulation of all that regarded religion, the administration of justice, and public policy. But there were in this institution the seeds of future discord and faction; for it was in the power of an ambitious noble, by ingratiating himself with the inferior orders, to obtain such an ascendency as to regulate every thing by his will; and, in fact, the constitution of Attica was at this time perpetually fluctuating, and the people for ever embroiled in civil commotions.

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initiated were enjoined to honor their parents, to reverence the immortal gods, and abstain from particular sorts of diet, particularly tame fowls, fish, beans, and certain sorts of apples.

When this was finished, the priests began to play off the whole machinery of the temple, in all its terror; doleful groans and lamentations broke from the fane; thick and sudden darkness involved the temple, momentary gleams of light flashed forth every now and then, with tremblings as if an earthquake had shaken the edifice; sometimes these corruscations continued long enough to discover all the splendor of the statues and images accompanied with voices in concert, dancings, and music; at other times, during the darkness, severities were exercised upon the initiated by persons unseen; they were dragged to the ground by the hair of their heads, and beaten and lashed with stripes, without knowing from whom the blows proceeded, or why they were inflicted: lightnings, and thunderings, and dreadful apparitions were occasionally played off, with every invention to terrify and astonish; at length, upon a voice crying out some barbarous, unintelligible words, the ceremony was concluded, and the initiated dismissed. The garment which he wore upon this occasion was not to be laid aside while it would hang together, and the shreds were then to be dedicated at some shrine, as a tattered trophy of the due performance of the mysteries of Ceres. These mysteries were held in such general respect, that it afforded great cause of reproach against Socrates for having neglected his initiation. The vows of secrecy, and the penalties to be inflicted on their violation, were as binding as could possibly be devised."—*Cumberland's Observer*, Vol. v. No. 115.

It is principally on the age of Theseus, that the Greeks have indulged their vein for the marvellous. Every thing is supernatural, and every great man is either a god or a demi-god. The most probable source of this I conceive to be, that the princes, who had then become really powerful, and exercised a high control over their subjects, taking advantage of the superstitious character of the times, and of the people's credulity, asserted to themselves a divine origin, in order the better to support their new authority. Having at all times the priests under their influence, they could do this with great facility, by instituting religious rites in honor of their divine progenitors; and if they could once prevail so far as to pass with their contemporaries for the offspring of the gods, it is no wonder that the succeeding ages should retain the same idea of them, and decorate their lives and exploits with a thousand circumstances of fabulous embellishment.

But the taking of Troy is the era when the marvellous part of the Grecian history ceases all at once. The reason appears to be this: — the absence of the kings and chiefs at this tedious siege involved the several states in great disorders. Many of these princes were slain, or perished by shipwreck; others were assassinated or deposed. The few who survived found every thing in misery and confusion, the country ravaged, the people pillaged and oppressed. In this state of things, the mind, awake only to real calamities and sufferings, is little disposed to indulge itself in romantic and poetic fictions. The games, which cherished that spirit, were for many years interrupted, and when again renewed, the more enlightened character of the Greeks, and the decline of that superstitious turn of mind which disposes to the love of the marvellous, had drawn a distinct line of separation between fiction and authentic history.

But even in the latter part of the fabulous period, there are some events of which the great outlines are sufficiently authentic, and which, as strongly characteristic of the genius, spirit, and manners of the times, are too important to be passed over without some reflections. The expedition of the Argonauts, the sieges of Thebes and of Troy, are very singular enterprises in so rude a period of society.

The Greeks, among other arts which they learned from the Phœnicians, were indebted to them for that of navigation; and they had not been long in possession of this art before they put it in practice in a very bold experiment. The voyage of the Argonauts to Colchis was undertaken 1280 years before the Christian era, according to Usher's Chronology, and 937 according to that of Sir Isaac Newton; and, when all its circumstances are considered, was certainly a very remarkable enterprise. What was the real purpose of the voyage, is extremely difficult to be determined. The poets have feigned a variety of fabulous circumstances, both of the enterprise and of its object; but among the seri-

ous opinions of the least informed writers, the most probable seems to be that of Eustathius, who conjectures this voyage to have been both a military and a mercantile expedition. The object, in his opinion, was to open to the Greeks the commerce of the Euxine Sea, and to secure some establishments upon its Asiatic coasts. For these purposes a fleet and troops were necessary. The armament consisted of many ships, of which *Argo*, the largest, was 50 cubits, or 75 feet, in length; about the size of a modern vessel of 200 tons burden. A number of heroes from every quarter of Greece joined in the expedition—the fathers of those brave warriors who afterwards distinguished themselves at the siege of Troy.

The Argonauts, under the command of Jason, set sail from the coast of Thessaly. Their expedition was lengthened by unfavorable weather, scarcity of provisions, and the consequent necessity of keeping as near as possible to the coasts. The variety of adventures which they met with in touching at many different islands and ports in the course of their voyage, have furnished ample matter of poetical fiction, resting on a slender basis of truth. Apollonius Rhodius, in Greek, and Valerius Flaccus, in Latin heroics, have sung the exploits of the Argonauts with no mean powers of poetry. The outlines of their expedition may be very shortly detailed. From the isle of Lemnos, where they made some stay, they proceeded to Samothrace. Thence sailing round the Chersonesus, they entered the *Hellespont*; and keeping along the coast of Asia, touched at Cyzicus, and spent some time on the coast of Bithynia; thence they entered the Thracian Bosphorus, and proceeding onward through the Euxine, at length discovered Caucasus at its eastern extremity. This mountain was their landmark, which directed them to the port of Phasis near to Oea, then the chief city of Colchis, which was the ultimate object of their voyage. Following the Argonauts through this tract of sea, and coasting it as they must have done, it appears evident that they performed a voyage of at least 440 leagues. Those who consider not the times and the circumstances in which the Greeks accomplished this navigation, have not perceived the boldness of the enterprise. These daring Greeks had been but recently taught the art of sailing, by the example of foreigners; it was their first attempt to put it in practice. They were utterly ignorant of navigation as a science; and they went to explore an extent of sea that was altogether unknown to them. Let us do those heroes justice, and freely acknowledge that the voyage of the Argonauts was a noble enterprise for the times in which it was executed.

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Preparatory to this remarkable voyage, the Argonauts were furnished with instructions by Chiron, the astronomer, who framed

for their use a scheme of the constellations, giving a determined place to the solstitial and equinoctial points: the former in the 15th degrees of Cancer and Capricorn, and the latter in the 15th degrees of Aries and Libra. This recorded fact* has served as the basis of an emendation of the ancient chronology by Sir Isaac Newton, of which I shall here give a short account.

Sir Isaac Newton's amended chronology is built upon two separate species of proofs: first, on an estimate of the medium length of the generations of men, or of the lives of the kings taken in succession, which former chronologists had enlarged very much beyond the truth: secondly, on a calculation instructed from the regular procession of the equinoxes. As to the first mode of proof, it may be observed, that when we are accurately informed from history that a certain number of generations intervened, or a certain number of sovereigns reigned, between any two events, we are enabled to ascertain pretty nearly the length of that interval, provided we can fix upon a reasonable number of years as the medium length of the generations of men, or the reigns of a succession of princes: a medium or average which is to be formed from a comparison of the successions of the sovereigns in the authenticated periods of modern and ancient history.

Between the return of the Heraclidæ into Peloponnesus and the battle of Thermopylæ, the date of which last event is well ascertained, though the former is not, there reigned a succession of seventeen kings in one branch of the sovereignty of Lacedæmon, and the same number in the other. Now, by comparing together a variety of authenticated successions of sovereigns in ancient and modern times, it is found that the medium duration of each reign is from eighteen to twenty years. The seventeen princes, therefore, who filled the interval above-mentioned, must, at the rate of twenty years for each sovereign, have reigned 340 years. These, computed backwards from the sixth year of Xerxes, and allowing one or two years more for the war of the Heraclidæ, and the reign of Aristodemus, the father of Eurysthenes and Procles, will place the return of the Heraclidæ into Peloponnesus 159 years after the death of Solomon, and forty-six before the first Olympiad, in which Chœrobus was victor. Instead of this moderate estimate, which is founded on rational data, the ancient chronologists, and their followers among the moderns, have assigned a space of thirty-five or forty years to each sovereign, which is double the true average calculation, and have thus placed the return of the Heraclidæ 280 years farther back than its true date.

Mr. Hooke, in his Roman History, has, upon these data, cor-

* See, however, the reasons for questioning the authenticity of this fact in Goguet, t. ii. b. 3. sect. 2.

rected the chronology of the Roman history under the kings; and has shown that the assignment of nineteen or twenty years to each of the seven kings, is more consistent with the series of events recorded in that period, than the ordinary computation given by historians, which supposes each of those princes to have reigned at a medium thirty-five years. If, by the same moderate estimate, the succession of the kings who reigned at Alba be compared with that of the kings at Rome, this computation will fix the coming of Æneas into Italy, and the era of the siege of Troy, exactly at the period to which the estimate of generations in the Greek annals would assign those events.

The second mode of proof on which Sir Isaac Newton has built his emendation of the ancient chronology, and which gives great additional strength to the former, is that which is founded on the regular procession of the equinoxes. This procession is known, by a series of the most accurate observations, to be at the rate of one degree in seventy-two years; that is, the sun crosses the ecliptic so much more to the west every succeeding year, that at the end of seventy-two years his progress westward amounts to one degree; by which means it happens, that the places of the equinox are continually receding from the constellations in the middle of which they were originally found at the time of the earliest observations. Whenever, therefore, the situation of the equinoctial or solstitial points, or any appearance depending on them, is mentioned, it is easy to ascertain the time of any event with which such an appearance was connected: for we have only to observe how many degrees the equinoctial points were then distant from their present position, and to allow seventy-two years for each degree. If we can depend upon the historical fact that the astronomer Chiron found that the two colures cut the ecliptic exactly in the equinoctial points, at the time of the Argonautic expedition, it was a fair inference of Sir Isaac Newton, when he found, in the year 1689, that these colures cut the ecliptic at the distance of 1ˢ 6° 29′ from their original position, and were then found to intersect it in ♉ 6° 29′, ♌ 6° 29′, and ♏ 6° 29, ♒ 6° 29, this advancement or procession being known to go on at the rate of a degree in seventy-two years, the length of the intervening space must therefore have been exactly 2027 years; which fixes the Argonautic expedition to 928 B. C.

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After this first successful experiment, we shall find the Greeks turn their attention more particularly to maritime affairs; and we may judge of their progress by the fleet which was assembled thirty-five years after the Argonautic expedition, for transporting the troops to the siege of Troy. Yet still it was not till the war with the Persians that the Greek marine became an object of serious importance. The naval victory of Salamis showed to what a height it had then attained. At this battle, the united fleet of

Athens and Sparta amounted to 580 sail; that of the Persians to no less than 1200. The size of these ships is not certainly known:* but there is one circumstance from which a conjecture may be formed: the port of *Piræus*, at Athens, was, according to the account of ancient writers, preceding Strabo, capable of containing 400 ships: but this harbour, in the opinion of Wheeler and other modern writers, could not easily contain above fifty of our middle-sized trading vessels.†

The state of the military art at the same period forms a pretty curious object of inquiry. The war of Troy, and that of Troy, are remarkable events in the age of which we now treat, and are, therefore, proper criteria by which we may form a judgment of the state of that art at this time in Greece. The first wars mentioned in Grecian history deserve no particular attention: they were probably little else than predatory excursions of barbarous tribes, to ravage the lands and carry off the flocks of their neighbors. The country, in those times, was open and defenceless; the towns a collection of rude huts, incapable of resisting assault, and unsecured by any regular system of fortification. At the time of the siege of Thebes, the state of the country was extremely different; as we may judge from the preparations of the Argives, their dispositions to besiege the city, and the duration of the war.

Œdipus had two sons, Eteocles and Polynices, to whom jointly he bequeathed the sovereignty of Thebes. Instead of dividing the kingdom, they agreed to govern it year after year alternately. Eteocles, at the expiration of his year, refusing to resign, Polynices solicited the aid of Adrastus, king of Argos, who espoused his cause, engaged several of the princes of Greece to assist him, and marched against the Thebans with a powerful army. They retreated before the enemy, and betook themselves to their city, which Adrastus immediately took measures for assailing. This is the first siege mentioned in the Grecian history, wherein we may suppose that the arts of attack, and the contrivances for defence, would be equally rude and unskilful. The only object of the besiegers was to blockade the city, to prevent the inhabitants from making sallies, and cutting off all succors from the surrounding country. For this purpose, as they knew not the art of drawing lines of circumvallation, they formed a large camp at a small distance from the city, as a security for the baggage and provisions of the army, and a retreat so fortified that they could defend themselves in it, in case of a repulse and attack on the part of the be-

* The ships of the Greeks, at the time of the war of Troy, had no keel, and only one mast, which was lowered upon the deck when the ship was in port. —Goguet, vol. ii. b. 4, c. iv.

† The largest ships mentioned by Homer are those of the Bœotians, which carried 120 men.—Il. l. 2.

sieged. They then divided their army into different bodies, each of which had the charge of assaulting a particular gate or entry to the city. It does not appear that they ever attempted an escalade, or endeavored to effect a breach in the walls; but contented themselves with directing their efforts against the gates alone. These they endeavored to force, but were as often beat back by a sally from the besieged, and forced to retreat to their camp, where they sustain a siege in their turn. In this way, it is not surprising that the siege of a large city was protracted for years. Thebes, after a long siege, gave no hopes of surrender; both parties became tired of the war, and it was at length agreed to terminate it by a single combat between the rival brothers, Eteocles and Polynices; an issue for the quarrels of sovereign princes, which the humane reader of history will often find reason to wish had been more frequently resorted to. The brothers fought under the walls of Thebes, and were both killed.

I cannot avoid here observing, that the ancients appear to have entertained, on some points, notions of morality, which to our apprehension seem very extraordinary. The conduct of Eteocles in defrauding his brother of his alternate right of sovereignty, admits, according to our notions of justice, of no apology. It was perfidious in the highest degree. Yet the Greek poets who have treated of this story, Euripides, Sophocles, and Statius, all agree in condemning Polynices, whom they judge unworthy of the honors of sepulture, for having troubled the repose of his country by a war. Similar to this is the judgment of the same poets upon the character of Œdipus, who is held forth as an object of the just vengeance of the gods, and condemned for his crimes to Tartarus, because he ignorantly slew his father in a justifiable quarrel, and innocently married his mother, whom he knew not. Such, likewise, is their opinion of the criminality of Orestes, who was with difficulty acquitted by the Areopagus, and is feigned to be incessantly tormented by the Furies, for having revenged on his mother Clytemnestra and her adulterous gallant Ægisthus, the murder of his father Agamemnon. It is no apology to say, as some critics have done, that the poets chose those subjects where an innocent person is represented as the victim of heavenly vengeance, because they gave greater exercise to the emotions of terror and pity. The poets, in reality, did not allow the innocence of those persons; on the contrary, they plainly condemn them as guilty, and justify their punishment.

The death of Eteocles and Polynices did not terminate the Theban war. It was renewed by Creon, their uncle, who, after a successful battle, having refused Adrastus leave to bury the dead, that prince implored the aid of the Athenians, then governed by Theseus, who, to avenge the cause of humanity, joined his forces to those of the Argives, and compelled Creon to enter into terms of peace. Some years after, the war broke out anew on

the part of the Argives. The sons of those commanders who had fallen during the siege of Thebes determined to revenge the deaths of their fathers. This was termed the war of the *Epigonoi*, that is, the descendants or sons of the former. They were joined by the Messenians and Arcadians, Corinthians and Megareans. The particulars of this war it is needless to trace: it was of long duration. The Thebans lost a decisive battle on the banks of the river *Glisas*: they retreated into Thebes: the city was attacked, taken by storm, and entirely destroyed by the conquerors. Pausanias mentions an epic poem on the subject of this war, which some writers have ascribed to Homer. "I own," says Pausanias, "that, next to the Iliad and Odyssey, I have not seen a finer work." Unfortunately, it has not reached our days.

The detail of the war of Troy rests chiefly on the authority of Homer; whose work, though embellished with fiction, must not in its great outlines be refused the credit of a real history. The poet, it is true, lived, as is generally supposed, at some distance of time from the events which he relates; 168 years by the account of Herodotus; between two and three centuries in the opinion of other writers; but by the computation of Sir Isaac Newton, his birth is placed only 28 years after the taking of Troy. But allowing him to have lived at a considerable interval of time from the events which he relates, it is agreed among the ancient writers that he followed the relations of other authors, whose works, though now lost, were known to the ancients, and esteemed of sufficient authority. Several of the principal events of the Trojan war are likewise authenticated by the Arundelian marbles. The Chronicle of Paros fixes both the commencement of the siege and its termination; the former in the 13th year of Menestheus, king of Athens, and the latter in the 22d year of the same prince. The latter date corresponds to the year 1184 B. C., according to Usher's Chronology, and 904 B. C. according to Sir Isaac Newton's.

The immediate cause of the war is generally allowed to have been the rape of Helen, the wife of Menelaus, by Paris, the son of Priam, king of Troy; although prior to that motive an animosity had subsisted between the Greeks and Trojans for many generations. It is not otherwise probable, that a quarrel which interested only Menelaus and his brother Agamemnon, should have been readily espoused by all the princes of Greece. The preparations for this war are said to have occupied no less than ten years; a length of time which ought not to surprise us, when we consider that this was the first war in which the whole nation had engaged. We may therefore look upon this enterprise as a proper test to judge of the state of the military art at this period in Greece. The time of preparation was employed in uniting the forces of the different princes, and in equipping a fleet to transport them into Asia. The troops, when assembled, amounted, according to the estimate of Thucydides, to about 100,000 men. In a general

assembly of the States held at Argos, or Mycenæ, the chief command was conferred on Agamemnon, king of Mycenæ, Sicyon, and Corinth; and all the princes of Greece engaged by oath to range themselves under his banners, and to furnish their contingent of men and ships. The preparations on the part of the Trojans were equally formidable. Priam, whose territories were considerable, extending from the isle of Tenedos to Upper Phrygia, had raised all his power, and strengthened himself by the alliance of many of the princes of the lesser Asia.

The Greeks embarked at Aulis, opposite to Eubœa, and landed in Asia, at the promontory of Sigæum. Their first operation, after beating back the enemy who opposed their landing, was to form a large camp at some distance from the city. The site of Troy is generally supposed to have been at the distance of four or five miles from the shore, at the foot of that ridge of mountains which goes under the name of Ida. The camp was close upon the sea-shore for the sake of the ships, which, as usual, were drawn upon the land, and enclosed within the ramparts of the camp; one line fronting the city and the other the sea; while the tents of the troops filled the intermediate space. Each petty nation or tribe of the Greeks had its separate quarter of the camp; which was fortified externally by a high mound of earth, flanked with wooden towers. These strong intrenchments were necessary to secure the invading army from the attacks of the enemy, who acted as often as they could upon the offensive, and frequently assaulted the camp. The fortifications of Troy consisted, in like manner, as is generally believed, of nothing more than a sloping wall of earth, flanked with wooden towers. The Greeks attempted to draw no lines of circumvallation, nor were any of those engines of war employed which came afterwards into use in regular sieges. The chief object of the Greeks during the first nine years of the war was to ravage and plunder the country—thus cutting off the sources of supply—and attacking the Trojans whenever they made a sally for the purpose of foraging, or attempted to force the enemy's camp. The detail of the chief events of this war is to be found in Homer, with a copious embellishment of fiction. The spirit of the Trojans forsook them upon the death of Hector. The city was taken soon after, either by storm or by surprise; and being set on fire during the night, was burnt to the ground, not a vestige of its ruins existing at the present day. The miserable Trojans perished either in the flames or by the sword of the Greeks, and their empire and name were extinguished for ever. About 80 years after the burning of Troy, a Grecian colony settled near to its site, and the rest of the kingdom formed part of the territory of the Lydians.

Nothing can show more clearly the rudeness of the military art, at this remote period of time, than the instances of those two remarkable sieges of Thebes and of Troy. An open war was no-

thing else than a series of plundering expeditions. When a city was to be attacked, the country around it was ravaged, and the inhabitants reduced, if possible, to the necessity of a surrender from the want of provisions. If its resources were considerable, while the state of the country at the same time denied supplies to the besiegers, the enterprise must have been abandoned, unless it succeeded by a stratagem, or the city was betrayed by some of its inhabitants. If at length it was won, it was never attempted to preserve the conquest by a garrison: the advantage gained was usually secured by burning the city to the ground. As these military expeditions, seldom undertaken at a great distance from home, were commonly made during the spring and summer only, the troops during the winter remained at home inactive, and were usually disbanded. In a long-continued war at a distance, as that of Troy, the winter season was spent in the camp, and there was a complete cessation of hostilities. Dictys of Crete informs us, that the Greeks during the winter exercised themselves in a variety of games, which tended to relieve the anxiety of the troops, and keep up the martial spirit. The game of chess is said to have been invented by Palamedes during this tedious siege.

With respect to the arrangement of the troops in order of battle, and the various military manœuvres then in use among the Greeks, our ideas are extremely imperfect. Homer frequently mentions an order of battle under the term *phalanx*, but he gives us no description of it. We see, indeed, in one place, that Nestor places the cavalry or the chariots in front,* the infantry in the rear, and the weakest of the troops in the centre. In another place, we find the infantry in front, and the cavalry in the rear: this shows that they adopted a variety of arrangement according to circumstances. It is quite impossible, from Homer's description, to have any distinct idea of the manœuvres of the troops during an engagement. He gives us no plan of attack: we know not whether the armies charged in one body or in separate divisions. We see no evolutions, no rational movements of the troops during the action, nor any manœuvre which shows conduct or skill on the part of the general. The chiefs or captains of the different bodies seem to have fought equally with the private soldiers, and to be interested only who should kill most men. Homer's descriptions are all of single combats, man to man: long discourses and taunting reproaches between the heroes, ending in a desperate duel, without any regard to the situation of the main army. It appears from Homer's accounts that the Greeks, in rushing on to engagement,

* When cavalry or horse are mentioned, we are not to understand that in those armies there were regular bodies of horsemen. The horses were employed only in the drawing of cars or chariots, each usually containing two men, of whom one managed the horses and the other fought.—*Goguet*, t. ii. b. v. c. iii.

preserved a deep silence, while the Trojans, like most other barbarous nations, uttered hideous shouts at the moment of attack.

How those armies were subsisted it is not easy to say. It is certain that in those times the troops had no regular pay: they served at their own charges alone. The levies were made by a general law obliging each family to furnish a soldier, under a certain penalty. The only recompense for the service of individuals was their rated share of the booty; for none were allowed to plunder for themselves: every thing was brought into a common stock, and the division was made by the chiefs, who had a larger proportion for their share.

The arms of the troops were of different kinds. Their offensive weapons were the sword slung from the shoulder, the bow and arrows, the javelin, or short missile spear, the club, the hatchet, and the sling. Their weapons of defence were an enormous shield which defended almost the whole body, made of thin metal, and covered with the hide of some animal; an helmet of brass or copper; and a cuirass and buskins, with coverings for the thighs, of the same metal. It is proper to observe that iron, though known before this period, was a rare metal, and accounted of high value. Achilles proposed a ball of iron as one of the prizes in the funeral-games which he celebrated in honor of Patroclus.* It was not used in the fabrication of weapons of war. These were formed of copper hardened by an admixture of tin; and even in much later periods the Roman swords were of the same compound metal.

On this subject, the state of the military art at this period among the Greeks, the President Goguet has, in vol. ii., book v., ch. iii., of his Origin of Laws, &c., collected a great mass of curious information, to which I beg leave to refer my readers. From all that can be gathered on the subject it appears that this art was yet extremely rude. But practice, which matures all arts, very soon reduced this into a system; and the Greeks, in a very early period of their history, seem to have become greater proficients in war than any of the civilized nations.

About 80 years after the taking of Troy, began the war of the Heraclidæ. Perseus, the founder of Mycenæ, left the crown to his son Electryon. Amphitryon, the grandson of Perseus, by Alceus, married Alcmena, the daughter of Electryon, and thus founded a double title of succession to that sovereignty; but having involuntarily killed his father-in-law, he was obliged to fly his country, while the sceptre was seized by his uncle Sthenelus, the brother of Electryon. By this act of usurpation, Hercules, the son of Amphitryon and Alcmena, was excluded from the throne of Mycenæ. Eurystheus, the son and successor of Sthenelus,

* Iliad, l. 23.

endeavored to destroy Hercules, by exposing him to numberless perilous enterprises; and continuing afterwards his persecution against his children, made war against the Athenians, who protected them; but he was defeated and slain. This event opened the Peloponnesus to the Heraclidæ, or descendants of Hercules, who were in the train of seeking the country when they were influenced by the weakest superstition. They retreated upon the response of an oracle, which declared that their absence was the only means of relieving Greece from the ravages of a pestilence. Thyllus, the son of Hercules, deceived by some ambiguous expressions of the oracle, returned after three years, and was killed in a single combat, by which he chose to decide the fate of the contending parties. It was on his death agreed that the Heraclidæ should not for 50, or, as others say, 100 years, return to Peloponnesus.

That term being expired, Cresphontes and Aristodemus, the descendants of Hercules, by Hyllus, returned, and found Tesamenes, the son of Orestes, possessed of the kingdoms of Argos, Mycenæ, and Lacedæmon. They overcame this prince, and took possession of his states; Cresphontes seizing Mycenæ, Temenes Argos, and the two sons of Aristodemus, Eurysthenes and Procles, dividing Lacedæmon. The last is an important fact, as shall afterwards be mentioned.

These wars miserably ravaged Greece, and threw it back into barbarism. The states became once more detached and weak,—the petty chiefs exercising the most despotic control, and following the barbarous policy of maintaining constant war with their neighbors to make their own office be felt as necessary. But matters were gradually verging to a crisis; and from the insupportable tyranny of those despots, the very name of king (*tyrannos*) became at length universally odious. Thebes was the first of the states which declared for a popular government, and others soon followed her example. The following event was the immediate occasion of this revolution:

The Heraclidæ, in their war against the Athenians, had been assured of success by the oracle, provided they did not kill Codrus, then king of Athens. In their attack on the Athenian territory, they determined, if possible, to preserve the life of the sovereign; but this generous patriot, who had learned the importance of the sacrifice, resolved to devote himself for his country;—he disguised himself like a peasant, and purposely quarrelling with a soldier of the hostile army, procured the death he wished. The Heraclidæ, a second time the dupes of an oracle, retired, not daring to fight against the Fates. Medon and Nileus, the sons of Codrus, disputed the succession to the crown; but the Athenians, though justly venerating the memory of Codrus, and honoring his blood, were weary of monarchy. They determined to establish a democracy; but from respect to their last prince, they conferred on his

son, Medon, the office of first magistrate under the title of *archon*, or the commander. This is the commencement of the Athenian Republic, about 1068 B. C. Of its political structure we shall afterwards particularly treat.

It was at this time that the Greeks, weak as they were, began to form distant colonies. Perhaps we ought rather to say, that it was this very weakness, and the oppression which they suffered at home, that forced many of them to abandon their country, and to seek refuge in other lands. A wandering people who have but lately become stationary, or a nation partly composed of foreigners, ingrafting themselves on the ancient inhabitants, have not that affection for a natal soil which is so strongly felt by an indigenous people who have for a long period of time peaceably inhabited a civilized country. Recently brought under control, and impatient of oppression from the remembrance of their former freedom, the least attempt to straighten the chain which confines them, disposes them immediately to shake it off. If too weak at once to break their fetters, they withdraw themselves from their bondage, and relinquish all connection with a government to which they do not incline to submit.

Such was the case at this time with many of the Grecian states. The oppression they suffered from the tyranny of their despots, and the miseries of continual war, either with their neighbors or between [illegible] forced great numbers in despair to abandon their country, and to transport themselves to the neighboring continent of Asia, which the Trojan war had laid open to them. A large body of the Æolians from Peloponnesus landed in the opposite country and founded twelve cities, of which Smyrna was the most considerable. Nileus, the son of Codrus, probably impatient of submission where he thought he had an equal title to rule, carried over into Asia a large body of the disaffected Athenians, reinforced by some Ionians from the Peloponnesus; and he, too, founded twelve cities, of which the most considerable were Ephesus, Miletus, Colophon and Clazomenæ. This territory, in compliment to its occupiers from Peloponnesus, [illegible] Ionia, the name of their original country. War, [illegible], and domestic oppressions, gave rise to many of the Grecian colonies, which afterwards came to be great and powerful states. Other colonies, however, had a different origin. In the more advanced and flourishing periods of the mother country, the narrow territory possessed by each of the states, and the increased population, compelled them to send off the inhabitants in quest of new settlements. Thus the Dorians sent off colonies to Italy and Sicily, which founded the cities of *Tarentum* and *Locri* in the former; and in the latter, *Syracuse* and *Agrigentum*. Colonies afterwards, of the same people, betook themselves to the islands of Crete, Rhodes, and Cos; and others passing into Asia, where many of their countrymen were already established, founded *Halicarnassus*, *Cnidus*,

and several other cities. Dr. Adam Smith, in his "Wealth of Nations," in treating this subject of the Greek colonization, has justly remarked that with regard to these new settlements, the mother city, though she constantly considered the colony as a child at all times entitled to great favor and assistance, and owing in return much gratitude and respect, yet viewed it as an emancipated child, over whom she pretended to claim no direct authority or jurisdiction. The colony settled its own form of government, enacted its own laws, and made peace or war with its neighbors as an independent state, which had no occasion to wait for the consent or sanction of the mother city.

Those colonies which Greece sent abroad in her more advanced periods, from an excessive increase of population, were observed to make a most rapid progress, and soon become great and flourishing states. Dr. Smith has accounted for this fact with his usual sagacity; and I make no scruple to adopt his observations.

"The colony of a civilized nation which takes possession either of a waste country, or of one so thinly inhabited that the natives easily give place to the new settlers, advances more rapidly to wealth and greatness than any other human society. The colonists carry out with them a knowledge of agriculture and of other useful arts, superior to what can grow up of its own accord in the course of many centuries among savage and barbarous nations. They carry out with them, too, the habit of subordination, some notion of regular government which takes place in their own country, of the system of laws which support it, and of a regular administration of justice; and they naturally establish something of the same kind in the new settlement. But among savage and barbarous nations, the natural progress of law and government is still slower than the natural progress of arts, after law and government have been so far established as is necessary for their protection.

"The progress of many of the ancient Greek colonies towards refinement, wealth, and greatness, seems accordingly to have been extremely rapid. In the course of a century or two, several of them appear to have rivalled, and even to have surpassed, their parent states. Thus Syracuse and Agrigentum in Sicily, Tarentum and Locri in Italy, Ephesus and Miletus in Asia Minor, appear to have been at least equal to any of the cities of ancient Greece. Though posterior in their establishment, yet all the arts of refinement, philosophy, poetry, and elegance, seem to have been cultivated as early, and to have been improved as highly, in them as in any part of the mother country. The schools of the two oldest Greek philosophers, those of Thales and Pythagoras, were established, it is remarkable, not in ancient Greece, but in Miletus and Crotona, the former an Asiatic, the latter an Italian colony. All those colonies had established themselves in countries inhabited by savage and barbarous nations, who easily gave place to the new settlers. Thus they had as much land as they chose, a benign

climate, and a fertile soil; for these circumstances must have dedicated the choice of their place of establishment. They were independent of their mother country, and at liberty to conduct themselves in any way they should judge most suitable to their interest." It was no wonder they should soon become great and powerful states.

Meantime, the parent country owed, perhaps, some of its greatest political revolutions to its first colonies. The Greeks who remained at home, naturally envious of the happiness and prosperity which they saw their countrymen enjoy in their new establishments, began to aspire at the same freedom of constitution. An ardent passion for liberty soon became the ruling passion of the Greeks. Thebes and Athens, we have already remarked, were the first states which threw off the royal government, and substituted in its place the republican. Other cities soon followed their example, and either entirely expelled their tyrannical governors, or so circumscribed their authority as to reduce them to the function of the principal magistrate of a democracy.*

A new road was now open to ambition; for it is the quality of the republican form of government to generate and keep alive that passion in all the members of the state: and hence, of all forms of government, it is necessarily the most turbulent. But these republics, thus newly framed, could not subsist by the ancient and very imperfect systems of laws by which they had been formerly governed: for these laws, framed in the spirit of despotism, and owing their obligation solely to the strong hand which carried them into execution, fell of necessity along with the power which framed and enforced them. The infant republics of Greece demanded, therefore, new laws: and it was necessary that some enlightened citizen should arise, who had discernment to perceive what system of laws was best adapted to the genius and character of his native state, who had abilities to compile and digest such a system, and sufficient weight and influence with his countrymen to recommend and carry it into execution. Such men were the Spartan Lycurgus and the Athenian Solon.

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* The word *Τυραννος*, in a strict sense, has no reference to the abuse of power, as in the modern acceptation of the word. It means, properly, the person invested with the chief authority under any form of government, and was applied originally to the best as well as to the worst of sovereigns.

## CHAPTER IX.

THE REPUBLIC OF LACEDÆMON — Origin — Divided Sovereignty — Brown's Theory of the Spartan Constitution examined—Reform of Lycurgus—Senate —Limitation of the Kingly Power—Regulation of Manners—Equal Partition of Land among all the Citizens—Iron Money—Arts prohibited and confined to Slaves—Public Tables—Education—Defects of the System of Lycurgus —Its effects on Manners—Theft authorized—Cruelty—Idleness—Creation of the Ephori.

THE territory of Lacedæmon, in Laconia, of which Sparta, situated on the Eurotas, was the chief city, forms the south-east corner of Peloponnesus; having Argos and Arcadia on the north, Messenia on the west, the *Mare internum*, or Mediterranean, on the south, and the bay of Argos on the Ægean Sea to the east. The whole territory, bounded by a natural barrier of mountains, did not exceed fifty miles in its longest diameter, but was extremely populous, containing many considerable towns and excellent sea-ports. Sparta is said to have been built by a prince of the name of Lacedæmon, who reigned there in the time of Cecrops, king of Argos, and Amphictyon of Athens, 303 years before the destruction of Troy, and 711 before the first Olympiad. At the time of the siege of Troy, Menelaus was the sovereign of Lacedæmon, whose wife Helen, carried off by Paris, the son of Priam, was the cause of the war.

Orestes, the son of Agamemnon, and nephew of Menelaus, succeeded to the sovereignty of Lacedæmon in right of his mother Clytemnestra, the daughter of Tyndarus. The united kingdoms of Argos, Mycenæ, and Lacedæmon were possessed by his son Tesamenus, who, being expelled and destroyed, as we have seen, by the Heraclidæ, they made a partition of his states, assigning Laconia to Eurysthenes and Procles, two sons of Aristodemus. The brothers did not divide the kingdom, but governed jointly with equal power, as the Roman consuls; and such continued to be the form of the Spartan sovereignty during a succession of thirty princes of the line of Eurysthenes, and twenty-seven of the race of Procles. The celebrated Lycurgus was the son of Polydectes, the sixth prince in a direct descent from Procles. Of the great political revolution, operated by this eminent legislator, we shall immediately proceed to give some account, after a previous examination of a new theory of the Spartan government, which, though extremely ingenious, rests on no basis of historical evidence.

It is in general a very just opinion that political establishments and forms of government have owed their origin not so much to the genius and efforts of any individual lawgiver or politician, as to a natural progress in the condition of men, and the state of society in which they arose: but this observation, in general true, is not universally so. It is as fallacious a position to assert that no political establishment has been the result of the genius of a single man, as to affirm that all have had that origin. It is too much the prevailing passion with speculative politicians to reduce every thing to general principles. Man, say they, is every where the same animal; and will, placed in similar situations, always exhibit a similar appearance. His manners, his habits, his improvements, the government under which he lives, the municipal laws by which he is regulated, arise naturally from that situation in which we find him, and all is the result of a few general laws of nature which operate equally upon the whole of the human kind. I very much fear that this fondness for generalizing has been prejudicial both to sound philosophy and to historic truth, by making fact bend to system. I am afraid that those who have flattered themselves with possessing that penetration of intellect which can develop the simple but hidden laws which regulate human nature, have forgotten that it is the knowledge of facts alone that must lead to the discovery of those laws; and that to know for certain whether we possess those necessary facts, we must have attained a perfect acquaintance with the history of the whole species. The philosopher, who antecedently to this extensive knowledge should, from a partial view of a single nation or race of men, or even from the best details which history can furnish, think himself qualified to lay down the laws of the species, may have the ability to make a very beautiful hypothesis, which, after all, may be as distant from the truth as an Utopian romance.

These reflections have occurred on considering a theory with regard to the constitution of Sparta, which was first started by an ingenious writer, Dr. Brown, in his Essay on Civil Liberty; and as it pleases the imagination by its ingenuity, it has obtained of late a pretty general currency. It has been adopted by Mr. Logan in a small tract entitled "The Philosophy of History," and has thence been ingrafted into a larger work, probably written by the same author, though under a different name.*

The theory to which I allude, proceeding upon this principle, that all political establishments result naturally from the state of society in which they arise, gives the following ingenious account of the origin of the Spartan government, and solution of all those singular phenomena which it exhibited.

The army of the Heraclidæ, when they came to recover the

* Rutherford's View of Universal History.

dominion of their ancestors, was composed of Dorians from Thessaly, the most barbarous of all the Greek tribes. The Achæans, the ancient inhabitants of Laconia, were compelled to seek new habitations, while the barbarous of Thessaly took possession of their country. Of all the nations whose are the subject of history, this people, it is said, bore the nearest resemblance to the rude Americans. An American tribe, where a chief presides, where the council of the aged deliberate, and the assembly of the people give their voice, is on the eve of such a political establishment as the Spartan constitution. The Dorians, or Thessalians, settled in Lacedæmon, manifested the same manners with all other nations in a barbarous state. Lycurgus did no more than arrest them in that state by forming their usages into laws. He checked them at once in the first stage of improvement; he put forth a bold hand to that spring which is in society, and stopped its motion.

It remains now to inquire whether this ingenious theory is consistent with historic truth. It may be remarked, in the first place, that the Dorians, thus represented as one of the most barbarous of the Greek nations, were in no period of history described as possessing that character. From the nature of their country, they were in ancient times a pastoral people, whose chief occupation was the care of their flocks and herds; and hence the Doric character in poetry and music is synonymous with the pastoral. But the Dorians inhabiting the centre of Greece adjoining to Attica, and in the immediate vicinity of Delphos, were probably among the most early refined of the Grecian tribes. They were among the first who, from an excessive population, sent forth distant colonies; and, if we are to judge of the mother state from her children, we should estimate their civilization at that period to be remarkable; since their colonies Syracuse and Agrigentum, Tarentum and Locri, were within a short period of their foundation among the most polished and luxurious of the states of antiquity.

But in reality we have no sufficient authority for this alleged fact, that the Dorians, or any other people, expelled the ancient inhabitants of Laconia, and took possession of their country. That the Heraclidæ, after a tedious war, at length recovered the dominions of their ancestors, is a fact upon which all antiquity is agreed; but that they used the absurd and unnatural policy of extirpating their own natural subjects, and planting a race of strangers in their stead, is an assertion which is not easily to be credited. A single oration of Isocrates is quoted as countenancing this alleged fact. Addressing the Lacedæmonians, he says, "Ye were originally Dorians;" and in another passage he says that the Dorians agreed to follow the Heraclidæ on condition of getting a share of the conquered lands. On this slender authority rests the supposed fact, that the Dorians got the whole of this territory by the extirpation of its former inhabitants. An incidental passage in

the speech of a rhetorician, referring to an event which must have happened near 800 years before his time, is thus the only warrant for a fact which in itself is contrary to all probability.

And here the question may be put, whence has it happened that this idea of the origin of the Spartan constitution should have escaped all the politicians of antiquity—all those ingenious and accurate writers who have been at the utmost pains to delineate the origin and nature of this extraordinary system of government—that those great geniuses of antiquity who lived so much nearer to the times of which they treated—who had all the information we have, and unquestionably a great deal more that we have lost—should not have had the sagacity to develope this very simple idea of the rise of this extraordinary constitution? How it has happened that Xenophon, Plutarch, Aristotle, Plato, Polybius, should, after all their researches in the subject, never have once stumbled upon a truth of such obvious discovery;—that all those writers should have joined in the highest encomiums of the extraordinary political ability of Lycurgus in effecting so singular and so violent a change in the constitution of his country and manners of his people;—and that it should now be discovered, at the distance of above 2500 years, that this legislator, so celebrated in antiquity, made no change whatever, and had no other merit than that of fixing by laws the manners of his countrymen in the rude state in which he found them.

Xenophon, in his treatise on the Lacedæmonian polity, enlarges on the most extraordinary genius of Lycurgus, who could devise a system so opposite to that of all other establishments, and is continually adverting to the contrariety between the laws which he established, and those which prevailed in the neighboring states.

Plutarch says, that Lycurgus, on returning after an absence of many years, which he had spent in Crete, in Egypt, in Africa, in Spain, and in Asia, in conference with the learned men of all those countries, and in the study of their laws and governments, conceived the great design of entirely now modelling the laws and constitution of his country, then in the utmost disorder and imperfection. He mentions particularly that the separation of the military profession from that of the mechanical arts was what Lycurgus most admired in Egypt, and thence he introduced the same regulation among his own countrymen at his return. He saw, says Plutarch, that "partial amendments would be like a mild and gentle medicine in a mortal disease; that the cure must be made by cutting off at once every principle of ancient corruption, and thus giving the body politic a new, vigorous, and healthy constitution." The same author informs us, that the execution of this design was attended, as might have been expected, with the greatest difficulty, and relates a particular circumstance which strongly proves it: the regulation of the diet of the citizens excited

such commotion, that the lawgiver in a popular tumult had one of his eyes beaten out.

Such are the ideas of two of the most politicians of antiquity, who have written professedly of the Spartan constitution and government. We have no hint from them of this ingenious theory, of fixing the manners of barbarians, or stopping the spring of society. Do we find any thing of this notion in Plato? Not a word: every thing, on the contrary, which marks an extraordinary change effected by Lycurgus: which intimates the difficulties he met with, and the force of genius by which he surmounted them. "He appeared," says Plato, "*like a god among men.*" He realized and actually executed what the greatest philosophers have scarcely dared to imagine: to raise men above the passion of interest, above pain, above pleasure; to extinguish in them the strongest propensities of nature, and to fill their whole souls with the love of glory and of their country.

Do we find any trace of these modern ideas in Herodotus, in Aristotle, in Polybius? Nothing that approaches to them. They all breathe the same sentiments: they all paint the wonderful change operated by Lycurgus, the extraordinary genius of that politician and lawgiver. But the modern theorists have discovered in the ancient governments principles and political springs which lay concealed from those who framed and those who lived under them. They have traced the principles of the Spartan constitution among every barbarous people: their government and laws among *the savages in America*; and the singular manners and more singular institutions which distinguished the Spartans from all the rest of Greece, among the tribes of savages who wander in the woods, and live in a state of nature.

If the laws of Sparta have this resemblance to the institutions of all barbarous nations, I would ask among what barbarous people do we find such institutions as the following, or any thing in their manners analogous to them? Children at Sparta were not considered as belonging to the individual parents, but to the state. After the performance of the first maternal duties, the youth were educated at the charge of the public; and every citizen had as much authority over his neighbor's children as over his own. Slaves, in the same manner, were, at Sparta, a species of common property; every man might make use of his neighbor's slaves; and hunt, as Xenophon informs us, not only with his neighbor's servants, but with his dogs and horses. Among nations in their rudest state, as the wild Americans, we know that the condition of children is, that they are subjected to the absolute will and disposal of the father: the community or tribe has no more concern with the children of the individual, than they have with his bow or his hatchet, or the prey that he has taken, or slain with his arrows.

A communion of property, such as that we have mentioned, is totally adverse to the manners of a savage people, whose charac-

teristic feature is predominant selfishness, and where the notions of the individual with respect to the property he possesses are obstinately repugnant to all communication.

The strong inducement to marriage held forth by the laws of Lycurgus, by punishing those with infamy who refused to marry, has no foundation in the manners of any of those barbarous nations with which we are acquainted.

We discover not in barbarous tribes any thing analogous to the oath of government, which, at Sparta, was annually renewed between the kings and people. The kings swore to rule according to the laws, and the people took a solemn oath, by the mouth of their magistrates, to be faithful and obedient, *on that condition*, to their government.

The confinement of the citizens of Sparta to the same simple diet, and the public tables, where all fed in common, have no parallel among any barbarous people that has ever yet been discovered. Intemperance in food, and drunkenness, are among the predominant vices of all rude nations.

No philosophic traveller has yet discovered among any barbarous nations in that period when they have become stationary, and have a fixed territorial residence, any traces of any agrarian law. If this could be found in any savage state, we might then suppose that Lycurgus made no extraordinary innovation when he divided Laconia into 39,000 equal portions among its whole inhabitants.

Similar illustrations might be added without number. It cannot be alleged, in opposition to those instances I have mentioned, that they are minute or unessential circumstances of dissimilarity, which would not counterbalance the great and material points of coincidence; they are, on the contrary, great and capital features of the Spartan constitution, to which we shall not find the smallest resemblance in the institutions or manners of any barbarous people. Instances of this kind, where they consist of important and specific facts, have much more influence than general characters, either of weight or dissimilarity. It is just as absurd to say, that a barbarous American tribe, where a chief presides, where the council of the aged deliberate, and the assembly of the people gives its voice, is on the eve of such a constitution as that of Sparta, as it were to say that they are on the eve of such a constitution as that of Britain;—because there is a coincidence of the same general characters, a king presiding, a privy-council deliberating, and the people giving their voice by their representatives in parliament.

I forbear to pursue this subject to a greater length. Too much, it may be thought, has been said on this modern theory of the Spartan government: but the currency it has obtained, and the general prevalence of the spirit of systematizing, which is hurtful to improvement in most sciences, and is particularly dangerous in matters of history, seemed to make it necessary that this remarkable example should meet with particular examination. I pro-

ceed now to a short delineation of the constitution of Sparta, and shall consider its great legislator in that point of view in which his character has been regarded by all antiquity.

The return of the Heraclidæ, as we have seen, gave two kings to Lacedæmon. In the partition of their conquests, Sparta fell to the share of Eurysthenes and Procles, the sons of Aristodemus, who agreed to a joint dominion, which should descend in the same manner to their posterity. The sovereignty, split into two branches, remained thus divided for about 900 years. The earlier periods of this government were, from that cause, as might have been expected, most disorderly and tumultuous. While each ruler acknowledged no other law than his own will, to which he found a frequent opposition from the equally arbitrary will of another, it is easy to imagine what must have been the condition of the subject, and what the weakness and disorder of the kingdom.

In this miserable state of anarchy, Lycurgus succeeded to one branch of the throne, by the death of his brother Polydectes; but the widow of the last prince being after a few months delivered of a son, he yielded the crown to his infant nephew. Thus at liberty, and meditating more effectually to serve his country at a future period, he travelled into Crete, Asia, and Egypt, in the view of studying the laws of foreign nations and the spirit of their governments. The singular example he had shown of moderation in resigning the throne, his known abilities, and the fruits expected from those treasures of acquired knowledge he was now supposed to possess, made his countrymen pray his return with eager impatience. He returned to Sparta; and even the kings themselves are said to have joined the voice of the people in soliciting his aid to reform and save his country.

Lycurgus undertook the arduous office in the true spirit of disinterested patriotism. He perceived immediately that he must encounter the most formidable difficulties in effecting what he proposed,—a total change, not only in the government but in the manners of his people. For this great purpose, he had learned from the example of the Cretan Minos, that no engine was so powerful over the minds of a rude and ignorant people, as the belief of acting by supernatural aid. The Delphian oracle, tutored, it may be supposed, to the purpose, declared Lycurgus the friend and favorite of the gods; and proclaimed to Sparta, that from him she should derive the most perfect government on earth.

Armed with this heavenly sanction, Lycurgus boldly proposed his system. The former constitution, if it deserved that name, was an unnatural mixture of an hereditary divided monarchy, and a disorderly democracy. Between these contending powers, there was no clearly defined partition of authority, nor any intermediate power to preserve the balance. To supply this want was the first aim of Lycurgus. He created a senate, elective, of twenty-eight members, whose function was, as a national council, to

prepare and digest laws and ordinances, which the people had a power to approve or reject. Nothing could come before the assembly of the people that had not either originated in the senate, or previously received its sanction. On the other hand, the approbation of the people was necessary to validate the determinations of the senate. Thus, in fact, the sovereignty resided properly in the people; to whom the senate was a council, furnished with sufficient power to regulate without dictating their determinations.

The kings presided in the senate, and had a double suffrage. They were likewise the generals of the republic: but in other respects, their power was extremely limited. They could form no enterprise without the sanction of a council of the citizens, whose duty was to watch over their measures. On considering this circumscribed authority of the kings, Condillac has well remarked, that the throne seemed preserved in the line of the Heraclidæ, only with the view of preventing any citizen aspiring to it; and two kings were in reality less dangerous to liberty than one; since they constantly kept alive two opposite parties, each restraining the other's ambition, and thus preventing all approach to tyranny.

A system thus simple, and thus beautifully balanced, seemed in some measure to ensure its own duration. But Lycurgus well knew, that permanence was not to be looked for from the best concerted system, if attention were not given at the same time to the regulation of that great spring on which all governments depend, the manners of the people. *Quid leges sine moribus vanæ proficiunt?*

In this important article, the regulation of manners, one single principle influenced the whole plan of Lycurgus. *Luxury is the bane of society.* Let us see in what manner the particular institutions of the Spartan legislator were calculated to guard against that powerful source of corruption.

The inequality of possessions was in the first place to be corrected, which could not be done without a new partition of territorial property. This was in all probability the greatest of those difficulties which Lycurgus had to encounter. An agrarian law, as striking at the root of wealth, pre-eminence and luxury, is of all political regulations that which has ever been found of the most difficult accomplishment. We shall see the effects of such attempts in the Roman commonwealth. The Greek historians have left us much in the dark as to the means which Lycurgus employed to enforce this necessary, but harsh and violent change. It seems most probable that he gained the wealthiest of the citizens to an acquiescence in this measure, by artfully employing the passion of honor to combat that of interest; for example, by admitting this class of men chiefly to a share in the government of the state, when the senate was first formed, and the chief offices

of the commonwealth supplied. As for the great body of the people, they would probably be gainers by the distribution.

The more effectually to annihilate the distinction of wealth, the Spartan legislator, instead of gold and silver, substituted *iron money*; the small value of which rendered the current specie of such unwieldy bulk, that no individual could easily accumulate a large quantity without the discovery of his avarice. The sum of ten *minæ*, equal to about thirty pounds sterling, would, in the Spartan money, as Plutarch tells us, fill a large apartment, and could not be transported without a yoke of oxen. This iron money, moreover, being probably estimated at a higher value than its intrinsic worth, prevented its currency beyond the Lacedæmonian territory; and thus contributed to another view of the legislator, in checking all commercial intercourse with foreign states.

In a government formed upon the principle of exterminating luxury, and abolishing all inequality of property, the exercise of no arts could be tolerated unless such as were merely necessary. The practice even of these, which might have occasioned some inequality of wealth, was forbidden to all the free subjects of the state, and permitted only to the slaves. Commerce was strictly prohibited; and although the territory of Lacedæmon contained a considerable extent of sea-coast, and afforded many excellent harbors, the Spartans allowed no foreigners to approach their shores, and had not a single trading vessel of their own.

Amidst these regulations repressive of every species of luxury, one of the most remarkable was the institution of the *Public Tables*. The whole citizens of the republic were divided into vicinages of fifteen families, and each vicinage had a common table, where all were obliged to dine or make their principal repast, each taking his place in the public hall without distinction of ranks; the kings, senators, and magistrates, indiscriminately with the people. Here all partook of the same homely fare dressed in the simplest and most frugal manner. At those public tables the youth not only learned moderation and temperance, but wisdom and good morals. The conversation was regulated and prescribed. It turned solely on such subjects as tended to instil into the minds of the rising generation the principles of virtue, and that affection for their country which characterizes the worthy citizens of every government, but was peculiarly eminent under the Spartan constitution.

Among the principal objects of the institutions of Lycurgus, the education of the youth of the republic was that on which the legislator had bestowed the most particular attention. Children, after they had attained the age of seven, were no longer the charge of their parents, but of the state. Before that period, they were taught at home the great lessons of obedience and frugality. Afterwards, under public masters, their education was such as to

train them up to that species of heroism, and the practice of the severer virtues, which so strongly marked the Spartan character. They were taught to despise equally danger and pain. To shrink under the stroke of punishment was a sufficient reason for having that punishment redoubled. Their very sports and amusements were such as are fitted to promote a strength of constitution, and vigor and agility of body. The athletic exercises were prescribed alike for both sexes: as the healthy vigor of the mother is essential to that of her offspring. To run, to swim, to wrestle, to hunt, were the constant exercise of the youth. With regard to the culture of the mind, the Spartan discipline admitted none of those studies which tend to refine or embellish the understanding. But the duties of religion, the inviolable bond of a promise, the sacred obligation of an oath, the respect due to parents, the reverence for old age, the strictest obedience to the laws: and above all, the love of their country, the noble flame of patriotism, were early and assiduously inculcated. In impressing on the mind these most important lessons, the great duties of morality, and instructing the youth in the knowledge of the laws of their country, the utmost attention was deservedly bestowed.

An acquaintance with the laws was a most material object in the education of all the citizens. Lycurgus did not permit his laws to be written. They were few and simple; and were impressed on the memory of the youth by their parents and masters, continually renewed in their minds by the conversation of their elders, and most effectually enforced by the daily practice of their lives.

Thus the reproach which some authors have thrown on the Spartan education, that it was fitted only to make a nation of soldiers—and that the mind as to every useful science, was left in absolute ignorance—is a rash and ill-founded accusation. The utmost attention was, on the contrary, bestowed on those which are the most important of all mental occupations, the duties of morality, and that true philosophy which teaches both the practice of the domestic virtues, and the great and important obligations of a citizen. The youth of Sparta, from their attendance at the public tables, were from their infancy familiarly acquainted with all the important business of the commonwealth. They knew thoroughly its constitution, the powers of the several functionaries of the state, and the defined duties and rights which belonged to the kings, the magistrates, and the citizens. Hence arose (more than perhaps from any other cause) that permanence of constitution which has been so justly the admiration both of ancient and of modern politicians: for where all orders of men know their precise rights and duties, and there are laws sufficient to secure to them the one, and protect them in the exercise of the other, there will rarely be a factious struggle for power or preeminence; as all inordinate ambition will be most effectually repressed by a general

spirit of vigilance and caution, as well as the difficulty and danger attendant on innovations.

But while we thus give to the general outlines of the plan of Lycurgus that encomium which it justly merits, let us not become the blind panegyrists of a system which, in many particulars, considered in detail, was much more deserving of blame than of admiration.

The Lacedæmonian manners, to the regulation of which so much attention was paid by the laws of Lycurgus, have afforded very ample matter of censure. The regulations especially regarding women have drawn on the Spartan legislator much deserved condemnation, both from moralists and politicians. Amidst all that rigid austerity of manners which the laws of Lycurgus seem calculated to enforce, how astonishing is it that public decency and decorum should have been totally overlooked! The Spartan women were the reproach of all Greece for their immodesty; and Aristotle imputes chiefly to their licentiousness and intemperance those disorders which were ultimately the ruin of the state. The men and women frequented promiscuously the public baths: the youth of both sexes ran, wrestled, and fought naked in the palæstra. Plutarch tells us, in one passage of the Life of Lycurgus, that there was no such thing as adultery known in Sparta in ancient times. But it is difficult to reconcile this assertion of Plutarch with what he himself records of that extraordinary peculiarity of the laws of Lycurgus which permitted one citizen to borrow another's wife, for the purpose of a good breed: and held it no dishonor for an aged man who had a handsome wife, to offer her to a young man, and to educate as his own the issue of that connection. The chief end of marriage, according to the lawgiver's notions, was to furnish the state with a vigorous and healthy race of citizens. It were therefore more just to have said, not that *adultery* was unknown at Sparta, but that there was no such *crime* recognised by its laws.

Yet Lycurgus, with an apparent inconsistency, which it is not easy to reconcile, had laid down the strictest regulations regarding the commerce between the sexes after marriage. The Spartan marriages were performed in secret: the husband stole away, or forcibly carried away, his wife: she was dressed for some time in man's apparel, to conceal her; while the husband continued to sleep as usual in the public dormitories with his companions, and to see his wife only by stealth, till the birth of a child made him known at once as a husband and a father.*

* The laws of Lycurgus discouraged celibacy by some very extraordinary regulations respecting old bachelors. They were forbidden to dance with women, and were compelled to walk naked through the streets in the winter, singing a ludicrous song which confessed the justice of their punishment.—*Gillie's History of Greece*, c. iii.

It is not only in the article of chastity that the Spartan laws have been justly blamed. Theft was a part of the system of education at Lacedæmon. Children were sent out to steal from the public markets and gardens, from the butchers' stalls, and even from private houses. If unsuccessful, they were punished with the loss of a meal; if detected in the theft, they were scourged with severity. It is a lame apology for an institution of this kind to say that it habituated them early to stratagems of war, to danger, and to vigilance. The talents of a thief are very different from the virtues of a warrior.

Cruelty, too, a quality extremely opposite to heroic virtue, was a strong ingredient in the Spartan system of manners. Paternal or maternal tenderness seemed perfectly unknown among this ferocious people. New-born children were publicly inspected by the elders of each tribe; and such as promised to be of a weak and delicate constitution were immediately put to death by drowning. At the festival of Diana, children were scourged, sometimes even to death, in the presence of their mothers, who exhorted them, meantime, to suffer every extremity of pain without complaint or murmur. It is no wonder that such mothers should receive, without emotion, the intelligence of the death of a son in the field of battle: but is it possible to believe that on such occasions they should so far conquer nature as to express a transport of joy? What judgment must we form of the Spartan notions of patriotic virtue, when, to love their country, it was thought necessary to subdue and extinguish the strongest feelings of humanity, the first instinct of nature.

The barbarous treatment which the Lacedæmonians bestowed on their slaves, or Helots, is mentioned by all ancient writers with extreme censure and just indignation. The Helots were a neighboring people of Peloponnesus, whom they had subdued in war, and reduced to servitude. They were numerous, and had at times attempted to shake off their yoke; whence it was judged a necessary policy to curb, to intimidate, and to weaken them by the most shocking inhumanity. It was not allowable to sell or to export them; but the youth were encouraged to put them to death for pastime. They went forth to the field to hunt them like wild beasts; and when at any time it was apprehended that those unhappy wretches had become so numerous as to endanger the state, the *cryptia*, or *secret act*, viz: a general massacre in the night, was ordained by law. The apologists of the Spartan legislator tell us, that these enormities cannot be imputed to Lycurgus; that they sprang from the perversion of his institutions, and were unknown in the early and more virtuous periods of the Lacedæmonian state; but a very little reflection must convince us, that they arose necessarily from that system of manners which his institutions were calculated to form.

It were easy to show that the Spartan institutions, however ex-

cellent in many respects, carried in themselves the seeds of much disorder.

To virtue there is no such enemy as idleness; but the Lacedæmonians, unless when engaged in war, were totally unoccupied. Lycurgus, it is said, wanted to make a nation of soldiers.* So his apologists conclude, because they find that his constitution was more proper for producing that effect than any other. But the ultimate object of all legislation is not to give a people any particular character, but to furnish them with such laws as are suited to produce, in their situation, the greatest political happiness. Lycurgus may have judged that the military character was most proper for producing that effect. In a small territory like that of Lacedæmon, security was evidently the first and principal object; and therefore to cherish the military spirit as essential to that end was deservedly a primary view of the legislator: but it ought not to have been his only view. It is in peace that a nation enjoys its truest happiness; and to qualify the citizens of every government for that which is their natural state, the sound health of the body politic, is certainly the chief end of legislation. Much therefore as we may admire the genius and talents of Lycurgus, we cannot say that he had extensive or even just views as a politician, since he seems to have concluded that while his laws cherished the military spirit, every other virtue or quality of a citizen would follow of course. The Lacedæmonians therefore exhibited in their general character exactly what might have been expected from the discipline that trained them. Unless when engaged in war, they were absolutely idle and listless. They had no occupations for a season of peace. The distinction of professions, which in other states gives rise to that separation of interests which, animating each individual, inspires life and vigor into the whole community, was there totally unknown. The common good, or rather the glory, of the state, came in place of every private inter-

* Xenophon, who had fought for and against the Lacedæmonians, remarks, that in the knowledge and practice of war, they far excelled all other nations, both Greeks and barbarians. Their troops were divided into regiments consisting of 512 men, subdivided into four companies, and each of these into smaller divisions, commanded by their respective officers. The soldiers were attended by a multitude of artisans and slaves, who furnished them with all necessary supplies, and accompanied by a long train of priests and poets, who flattered their hopes and animated their valor. A body of cavalry always preceded their march. They encamped in a circular form; they employed for their security out-sentries and vedettes; and regularly every morning and evening performed their customary exercises. In the day of battle, the Spartans assumed an unusual gaiety of aspect; and displayed in their dress and ornaments more than their wonted splendor. Their long hair was arranged with simple elegance; their scarlet uniforms and brazen armor diffused a lustre around them. As they approached the enemy, the king performed sacrifice, the music struck up, and they advanced with firmness and alacrity to the charge. Xenophon has declared, that when he considered the discipline of the Spartans, all other nations appeared but children in the art of war.—*Xenoph. de Rep. Lac.; Gillies's Hist. of Greece*, c. 3.

est—a noble object! but, unhappily, from the weakness of our nature, utterly inadequate to the desires and passions of the great mass of a people. The insipid and inactive life of the Spartans was accordingly a perpetual subject of raillery to the rest of the Greeks, and to none more than to the lively, restless, and volatile Athenians. To this purpose Ælian mentions a witticism of Alcibiades, when some one was wanting to turn the contempt which the Lacedæmonians had for death: "It is no wonder," said he, "since it relieves them from the heavy burden of an idle and stupid life."

From the military character, however, of this people, the small extent of their territory, and the wise precautions of their lawgiver for preventing all extension of its limits, the constitution of this republic possessed a very strong principle of duration. We shall see that in reality it subsisted much longer without any important revolution than any other of the states of Greece.

The first material change, however, upon the system of Lycurgus was made within 140 years of his own time, by the introduction of a new magistracy, under the name of the *Ephori*. Theopompus, one of the kings, jealous of the power of the senate, which was generally supported by the concurring judgment of the people, devised a plan for influencing their resolutions, by giving them a set of officers of their own body. These officers, termed Ephori, were five in number; they were elected by the people, and enjoyed a similar but a higher power than that of the tribunes of the people at Rome. Instituted at first to form an equipoise between the senate and people, they gradually usurped a paramount power in the state. They could, by their own authority, expel or degrade the senators, and even punish them capitally for any offence which they might interpret into a state crime. The kings themselves were under their control, and the Ephori had a right to fine them and put them in arrest; a dangerous prerogative, which it was easy to see would never stop short of absolute power: and accordingly they assumed at length the function of deposing and putting the kings to death. These, on the other hand, still nominally the chief magistrates, plotted against the power and persons of the Ephori; they bribed, deposed, and murdered them. Thus in the latter periods of the Spartan commonwealth, instead of that equal balance established by the original plan of Lycurgus, there was between the different branches of this constitution a perpetual contention for superiority, the continual source of faction and disorder. Most of the internal causes which in time operated to the decline and fall of the Spartan government, particularly to be found in those institutions which led to the corruption of manners, have been already noticed. These silently undermined this political fabric; while other causes external of its constitution were the more direct and immediate causes of its destruction. These shall

be opened in their order, while we pursue the general outlines of the national history; after a brief delineation of the rival republic of Athens, to which we proceed in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER X.

THE REPUBLIC OF ATHENS — Revolution in the States of Attica — Regal Government abolished — perpetual Archons — Draco — Solon — His Institutions — Senate — Areopagus re-established — Power of the Popular Assemblies — Laws — Ostracism — Appeal from all Courts to the People — Manners — Revenue — Grecian History continued, Pisistratus, Hippias, and Hipparchus — Alcmæonidæ.

I HAVE, in a former chapter, observed that Greece, in the early part of her history, probably owed some of her greatest political revolutions to her first colonies. The prosperity which the mother country saw her children enjoy in their new settlements, while she herself was yet groaning under the worst of all servitude, that of a bad government, naturally inspired an eager wish to attain if possible a similar freedom of constitution. The domestic disorders of Attica, in particular, had grown to a great height. The union of its states by Theseus was but a forced league of association: it was the consequence of the subordinate cities being involved in frequent quarrels, and hence courting the aid of the principal, that the latter thus acquired a sort of dominion over the whole of them. To bind these firmly together it was necessary to annihilate in the smaller states this sense of dependence on the principal; to make them all parts of the same body, by abolishing their particular magistracies, bringing about a submission to the same general magistrates, and giving them a common system of laws. Theseus, and his immediate successor, had attempted this, but were unequal to the task. The disorders which arose from the tyranny of some of those princes effected an union which their slender political talents had labored in vain to accomplish; but an union hostile to their powers, which had for its end the abolition of the regal office. Codrus, the last of the kings, was, as we have seen, a true patriot, and worthy to reign; but he having sacrificed his own life to save his country, the Athenians, dreading a renewal of their former oppression, determined to make the trial of a new constitution. They were ignorant, however, of the best means of obtaining what they desired. They abolished the title

of king, while the magistrates whom they put in his place enjoyed almost the same authority. From respect to the memory of Codrus, they appointed his son Medon chief magistrate, with the title of *archon* or commander. They conferred on him the office for life, and even continued it hereditary in his family; so that the Athenian republic was governed for 341 years by a succession of perpetual archons of the family of Codrus. Of the difference between their authority and that of the former kings, historians have given us no distinct idea. Some writers, indeed, tell us, in general terms, that the perpetual archons were accountable to the people for their conduct,—a control which the kings did not acknowledge;—but as to the precise nature of the Athenian government at this time, we are, on the whole, extremely ignorant.

This form, however, of a monarchy in all its essentials, though without the name, became in the end equally grievous as that which had preceded it. The perpetual archonship was abolished, and the office was now conferred for ten years. Even this duration was found repugnant to the prevailing spirit of democracy; and after submitting for a few years to the decennial archonship, they reduced the term to a single year, and appointed nine magistrates with equal authority. Of these the chief was called by pre-eminence *the archon*, and, like the Roman consuls, gave his name to the current year in the state annals. The second archon had the title of *king*, [Greek:] and was the head of the religion of the state; the third was termed the *polemarch*, from his function of regulating all military affairs. The remaining six archons were called *thesmothetæ*, and held the office of judges in the civil courts of the republic. The whole body of nine formed the supreme council of the state.

Meantime the constitution was by no means strictly defined. The laws framed during the regal government, and accommodated to that despotic authority, were quite unsuitable to the democratic spirit now become predominant: and no attempts had yet been made for their alteration or improvement. The limited power of the annual magistrates was insufficient to check those factions and disorders which a yearly returning election kept constantly alive in the mass of the people.

A virtuous citizen of the name of *Draco*, whose eminent qualities had raised him to the dignity of chief archon, was prompted to attempt a reform, by introducing a code of laws* which might operate as a restraint on all orders of the state. Presuming that a desperate disease requires a violent remedy, and probably influenced by the austerity of his own temper, the penal laws which he framed made no distinction of offences, but punished all equally

* There were probably no written laws at Athens before those of Draco.—*Aul. Gell. i.* 1., c. 18.

with death. The genius of Draco was evidently unequal to the task he had undertaken—he made some changes of form without the essence. He weakened, it is said, the authority of the Areopagus, and instituted a new tribunal, of which the judges were termed *ephetai*, but which was of no duration: and the extreme severity of his laws defeated their own object. They were rarely executed, and fell at length into complete disuse.

In the 3d year of the 46th Olympiad, and 594 years before the Christian era, Solon, a noble Athenian, of the posterity of Codrus, attained the dignity of archon, and was solemnly intrusted by his countrymen with the high power of new modelling the state, and framing for the Athenians a complete digest of civil laws. Solon was a man of extensive knowledge, a virtuous man, and a true patriot; but he seems to have been deficient in that strength of mind and intrepidity of nature which are absolutely necessary for the reformation of a corrupted government. His disposition was too placid and too temporizing. He aimed not at changing the character of his people, nor did he at all attempt to introduce that equality among the citizens so essential to the constitution of a democracy. Accommodating himself to the prevailing passions of men, rather than endeavoring to correct them, his laws, as he said himself, were not the best possible, but the best which the Athenians were capable of receiving.*

The people claimed the chief power in the state—Solon gave it them. The rich wanted offices and dignities—the system of Solon accommodated them to the utmost of their wishes. He divided the whole citizens into four classes. In the three former were the richer citizens, according to their different degrees of wealth. The first class consisted of those who were worth 500 medimni of grain, or as many measures of oil; the medimnus, according to Arbuthnot's tables of weights and measures, was somewhat more than four English pecks. The second class consisted of those who were worth 300 medimni, and who were able to furnish a horse in time of war. The third class comprehended such as had 200 medimni; and the fourth class consisted of all the rest of the citizens. All the dignities and offices of the commonwealth were supplied out of the three first classes, or the wealthy citizens; but the fourth, which was much more numerous than all the other three, had their right of suffrage in the Ecclesia, public assemblies, where the whole important business of the state was canvassed and determined. The framing of laws, the election of magistrates, the making war or peace, the forming treaties and alliances, and the regulation of all that regarded either religion or civil policy, were debated and decreed in the public assemblies;

* Plutarch's Life of Solon.

where the fourth class, from their vast superiority of numbers, carried every question, and of course had supreme rule. In these assemblies every citizen above fifty years of age had the privilege of haranguing.*

To counteract the mischief of a government entirely in the hands of the people, and to regulate in some measure the proceedings of those assemblies, necessarily tumultuous and undecisive, Solon instituted a senate of 400 members, chosen from among the most respectable of the citizens, whom he invested with the power of deliberating on and preparing all public measures before they came under the cognizance of the popular assemblies: a regulation which gave rise to this just remark of Pharaxli, that Solon employed the wise men to reason, and the fools to decide. No motion or overture with regard to the affairs of the commonwealth could take its origin in the *Ecclesia*: it must have been previously canvassed and debated in the Senate. This great council was augmented to 500, and afterwards to 600, upon an increase of number of the Athenian tribes.

Still farther to restrain and moderate the proceedings of the public assemblies, Solon re-established the authority of the Areopagus, which Draco had abridged and weakened by the institution of the *Ephetai*. And this tribunal, of whose origin and constitution we have formerly treated, was now invested with more extensive powers and privileges than it had ever before enjoyed. To this august assembly Solon committed the guardianship of his laws, and the charge of executing them. They had the custody of the public treasury — and, as Plutarch informs us in the Life of Themistocles, the charge of its expenditure: but this last seems to be inconsistent with the powers lodged in the senate and people. The court of Areopagus, likewise, had a tutorial power over all the youth of the republic. They appointed them masters and governors, and superintended their education. They were likewise the censors of the manners of the people, and were employed to punish the idle and disorderly, and reward the diligent and industrious. For this purpose, they were empowered to inquire minutely into the private life and conduct of every citizen; the funds he

* To give some idea of the numbers which constituted the public assembly, or the Legislature of Athens, we learn from two polls of the citizens that were taken, first in the time of Pericles, and afterwards in that of Demetrius Phalereus, that the Athenian citizens in the former period amounted to 14,040 persons, and in the latter to 21,000. The remaining population of the republic consisted of slaves, male and female, and children and youth under the age of manhood. The former, namely, the actual slaves, amounted to no less than 400,000. The proportion of the free citizens to slaves was still smaller at Lacedæmon than at Athens; whence we may judge how far liberty was truly the characteristic of these ancient republics, whose constitution has been the subject of so much foolish admiration. See *Gillies's Translation of Lysias and Isocrates, Pref.; and Mitford's Greece*, vol. i. p. 253.—*Thucyd.* l. viii. c. 40.

possessed, the profession he followed, and the manner in which he spent his time: an excellent institution, if we could suppose it to be strictly enforced. The regulation of every thing that regarded religion was likewise committed to this high tribunal.

I have remarked, in a former chapter, that the number of the Areopagites seems to have been various at different periods; as some authors mention this tribunal as consisting only of nine judges, others of thirty-one, and others again of fifty-one. Nay, there is a probability that, in the more advanced times of the commonwealth, the numbers were even quadruple what has been mentioned. If the trial of Socrates proceeded before this court, which the nature of his crime (the charge of attacking the religion of his country) makes it presumable it did, we find 281 judges who voted against him, besides those who gave their suffrages in his favor.

The judges of the Areopagus were chosen from among the most respectable of the citizens, and were generally such as had discharged the office of archon. The most scrupulous attention was paid to character in the election of these judges. The slightest imputation of immorality, a single act of indecency, or even of unbecoming levity, was sufficient to disqualify from obtaining a seat in that tribunal, or to forfeit a place after it had been conferred. To be found in a tavern was such a stain on the character of a judge, that it was deemed a sufficient reason of exclusion from that office. *Let no Areopagite*, says the Athenian laws, *compose a comedy*. That judge was easily thought to have prostituted his character, who had stooped to employ his talents in furnishing a frivolous amusement for the people.

The institution of the senate, and the revival of the authority of the Areopagus, imposed undoubtedly some restraint on the proceedings of the popular assemblies. But still the Athenian populace had the ultimate power of decision in all the affairs of the commonwealth; a constitution that must have rendered fruitless the regulations of the wisest legislator that ever existed. The subsequent detail of the Grecian history will afford some strong instances of the miseries which flow from so defective a form of government. "*Illa vetus Græcia*, (says Cicero,) *quæ quondam opibus, imperio, gloriâ floruit, hoc uno malo concidit, libertate immoderatâ ac licentiâ concionum.*" * It was not alone by this disease, as we shall show in its proper place, although that must unquestionably be allowed to have had a great influence. Athens, in particular, was from that cause a scene of incessant disorders and combustion. Continual factions divided the people, and it was

* "Ancient Greece herself—once flourishing in dominion, wealth, and fame, fell by this disease alone—the immoderate freedom and licentiousness of her popular assemblies."

often in the power of a venal orator, a worthless demagogue, whose only merit was a voluble tongue and dauntless effrontery, to counteract the measures of the greatest political wisdom, and persuade to such as were ruinous and disgraceful. Athens often saw her best patriots, the wisest and most virtuous of her citizens, sometimes sacrificed to the most depraved and most abandoned.

The particular laws of the Athenian state were, generally speaking, more deserving of encomium than its form of government. Solon restrained the severity of creditors to their debtors, by prohibiting all imprisonment for debt; but he restrained at the same time the frequency of contracting debts by the severe penalty of the forfeiture of the rights of citizenship; a punishment which, though it did not reduce a man to servitude, deprived him of all voice in the public assembly, or share in the government of the commonwealth. In like manner, if a debtor died insolvent, his heir was disfranchised till the debt was paid. This was a wise regulation; for no indigent man ought to be a legislator. The Areopagus, by an inquiry termed *Euthynæ*, inspected into the life and morals of all who held offices in the state, and such as could not stand the scrutiny were not only incapacitated for employ, but declared infamous. Such was the award likewise against a son who should refuse to support his indigent parents. Solon ordained that a man's inheritance should be equally divided among all his lawful children, and allowed no higher provision to an illegitimate child than *five talents*. He permitted a husband to divorce his wife on restoring her dowry; and a wife to leave her husband upon reasonable cause shown to a judge, and allowed by him.

By the Athenian laws, children, whose fathers were killed in the service of their country, were appointed to be educated at the public expense. "Let the father" (says the laws of Solon) "have the privilege of bestowing on that son a funeral encomium, who died valiantly fighting in the field. He who receives his death while fighting with undaunted courage in the front of the battle, shall have an annual harangue spoken to his honor."

The laws relating to slaves did great honor to the humanity of the Athenians, and formed a strong contrast to the inhuman usages which prevailed with regard to them at Lacedæmon. All Athenian slaves were allowed to purchase their freedom at a price stipulated by the magistrate. If any slave found his treatment intolerably severe, and was unable to purchase his freedom, he might oblige his master to sell him to another who would use him better. The emancipation of a slave, however, did not exempt him from all the duties to his master. He was still bound to the performance of certain services which the law prescribed, and to show him due homage and respect as a patron and benefactor. Such enfranchised slaves were not admitted to the rights of citizens. They were not allowed to attend the public assemblies; nor could they hold any office in the commonwealth. Their

enfranchisement relieved them only from the hardships of servitude. Yet they might marry free women; and their children by such had all the rights of citizens.

It was a very singular law of the Athenians, which permitted a man to bequeath his wife, like any other part of his estate, to any one whom he chose for his successor. The mother of Demosthenes was left by will to Aphobes, with a fortune of *eighty minæ*. The form of such a bequest has been preserved, and runs thus: "This is the last will of Pasio the Acharnean. I bequeath my wife Archippe to Phormio, with a fortune of one talent in Peparrhetus, one talent in Attica, a house worth a hundred minæ, together with the female slaves, the ornaments of gold, and whatever else may be in it." *

One law of a very improper tendency, was peculiar to the state of Athens:—it was that which allowed a *popular action* for most offences,—or permitted *any citizen* to be the prosecutor of any crime committed against *a citizen*. An injury done to an individual, it is true, is not only an offence against that person, but likewise against the state, whose laws are thereby violated: yet it is a very dangerous policy to allow to any person whatever of the public, a right of prosecuting the aggressors. It is easy to conceive what a source would thus be opened for unjust, revengeful, and calumnious prosecutions. It is true, that the mischiefs which might possibly arise from this law were counteracted, in some measure, by another ordinance, which declared, that any accuser or prosecutor who had not a fifth part of the votes in his favor should pay a heavy fine; but the remedy was not adequate to the evil—for even the most calumnious accusations might often find a fifth part of the people to support them; and the rich would seldom be restrained from the gratification of malevolence or revenge by a pecuniary fine.

This leads to the mention of one most impolitic and pernicious law; not indeed peculiar to Athens, but common likewise to the states of Argos, Megara, Miletus, Syracuse, and others. Solon, who found the temperament of his countrymen repugnant to those rigorous restraints on the accumulation of wealth which Lycurgus had established at Sparta, was desirous however of providing some security against the danger which might arise in a democracy, from any individual attaining an inordinate degree of power or influence. For this purpose the Athenian lawgiver retained and enforced an ancient institution termed the *Ostracism*, which was said to have been first introduced in the age of Theseus. The professed object of this institution was not the punishment of offenders. It was not requisite that a man should be accused of any crime to deserve the sentence of the ostracism. It was enough

* Jones's *Commentary on Isæus.*

that any person, either from his wealth, his uncommon talents, or even his eminent virtues, should become an object either of envy, or of public praise and admiration. When a citizen had arrived at that degree of credit as to be justly either of those descriptions, and to offend by too much popularity, any individual of the people might demand an ostracism. The ceremony was this: every citizen who chose [illegible] or piece of tile, on which having written the name of the person in his opinion the most obnoxious, he carried it to a certain place in the forum, which was inclosed with rails, and had ten gates, for ten tribes. Officers were appointed to count the number of *shells*; but, if they were fewer than 6000, the vote did not take place. If they exceeded that number, the several names were laid apart, and the man whose name was found on the greatest number of *shells*, was banished for ten years from his country; his estate in the meantime remaining entire for his own use or that of the family.

This "*shelling*," though it has found its advocates, as apparently consonant in theory to the spirit of a pure republic, was in practice a barbarous, disgraceful, and impolitic institution. It powerfully repressed ambition; but it was by discouraging merit and the desire of excellence. It afforded an easy handle for the worst and most dangerous members of the community to rid themselves of the greatest and the best; thus counteracting its own end, and paving the way for that usurpation against which it was intended as a barrier. It recommended the worst passions of the human mind under the disguise of the best: it substituted envy for patriotism, made virtue criminal, and stained the nation with the most opprobrious character,—that of public ingratitude. Thus we find, in the course of the history of this republic, that virtue, without the imputation or suspicion of ambitious views, was frequently the victim of this pernicious law. It was enough that Aristides by his virtues had excited the glorious epithet of *just*: that epithet, in the eyes of the Athenian people, was sufficient crime. When Aristides himself was passing by, an illiterate rustic requested him to write upon his shell the name of *Aristides*. Why, what harm, my friend, said the other, has Aristides done you? None in the world, replied the clown; but I hate to hear every body call him the *Just*. Thucydides, from whom Athens had received the most eminent services, at length the victim of ostracism, composed in his exile that history in which he records the fame of his ungrateful country; a fact which was drawn from Cicero this severe but just remark: — "Hos libros tum scripsisse dicitur, cum a republica remotus, et id quod optimo cuique evi Athenis accidere solitum est, in exilium pulsus esset." * With much reason does Valerius

* "Those great works are said to have been written when he was driven into exile; the common reward bestowed by Athens on her most virtuous citizens."

Maximus, after enumerating the instances of similar ingratitude to Miltiades, to Cimon, to Themistocles, to Phocion, and particularly to Aristides, exclaim with bitter irony: — "Felices Athenæ, quæ post illius exilium invenire aliquem aut virum bonum, aut amantem sui civem potuerunt." *

The laws of Solon, unlike those of Lycurgus, were all committed to writing: but one fault, common to all the laws of the Athenian legislator, was the obscurity with which they were expressed: a capital defect indeed of laws, when, instead of a clear warning voice, which, teaching every man his duty, represses litigation, they mislead by their obscurity, and are thus the perpetual source of contest and chicane.

It was a singular peculiarity of the constitution of Athens, and, as Plutarch informs us, likewise of Thebes, that after a law was voted and passed in the assembly of the people, the proposer of the law might have been cited in the ordinary civil courts, tried, and brought to punishment, if the court was of opinion that the law was prejudicial to the public. This peculiarity is noticed in one of Mr. Hume's political essays, (*Of some remarkable Customs,*) and that author mentions several examples in the Grecian history; among the rest, the trial of Ctesiphon, for that law which he had proposed and carried, for rewarding the services of Demosthenes with a crown of gold; a trial which gave occasion to two of the most splendid and animated orations that remain to us of the composition of the ancients; the orations of Æschines and Demosthenes *Περὶ στεφάνου*. This species of trial was entitled the *Γραφὴ παρανόμων*, or the indictment of illegality; and was intended as a check upon the popular leaders, who, by their influence in the public assemblies, were able frequently to procure the enactment of most pernicious laws. This was indeed a violent remedy, and apparently very contrary to republican freedom; but it was esteemed so beneficial a provision, that Æschines, in his oration against Ctesiphon, maintains that the democracy could not subsist without it.

An appeal lay from all the Athenian tribunals, except the Areopagus, to the *ecclesia*, or assembly of the people. The interpretation of the laws may thus be said to have depended ultimately on the judgment of a populace swayed by prejudices, divided by faction, or the dupes of a worthless orator or demagogue. The Athenian jurisprudence, therefore, rested on no fixed principles, or solid basis. It is almost equivalent to a total want of laws, to have such only as the passions and caprices of a people can mould or distort, or at pleasure so interpret, as to accommodate to the most opposite purposes.

* "Happy Athens! that, after driving such a man from her bosom, could yet find one virtuous or devoted citizen remaining."

I have thus endeavored very briefly to trace the outlines of the Athenian Constitution. The distinct powers of every branch of that constitution, and the precise extent of jurisdiction, the rights and privileges of the several courts, have occupied many volumes, and supplied an extensive field of learned but unimportant controversy, which furnishes at least a proof of the difficulty of obtaining distinct notions of the particular features of this constitution, though its general nature appears sufficiently intelligible. Those who wish to go more into detail ought to peruse with attention the fragment of Aristotle concerning the Athenian Constitution, the 2d, 4th, and 6th books of his Politics, the tract of Xenophon on the Athenian Republic, the Life of Solon by Plutarch, the *Archæologia* of Archbishop Potter, and, to sum up all, the various information concerning the Athenian state, contained in the *Thesaurus Græcarum Antiquitatum* of Gronovius.

The manners of the Athenians formed a most striking contrast to those of the Lacedæmonians. It is, in fact, hardly possible to find a greater dissimilarity even in nations inhabiting the most opposite extremes of the earth. The Athenian found, either in his relish for serious business, or in his taste for pleasure, a constant occupation.* The arts at Athens met with the highest encouragement. The luxury of the rich perpetually employed the industry of the poor; and the sciences were cultivated with the same ardor as the arts: for the connection of mental enjoyments with moderate gratification of sense is the refinement of luxury. But in the pleasures of the Athenians, unless, indeed, in the most corrupted times of the commonwealth, decency was most scrupulously observed. We have seen those rigid restraints on the conduct of magistrates. An archon convicted of drunkenness was, for the first offence, condemned to pay a heavy fine, and for a second was punished with death. This general decency of character was much heightened by a certain urbanity of manners, which eminently distinguished the Athenians above all the other states of Greece. There are some singular proofs of this character recorded, even of their public measures. Plutarch, in the life of Demosthenes, has mentioned two remarkable examples. In the war against Philip of Macedon, one of the couriers of that prince was intercepted, and his despatches seized; they opened all the letters which he carried, except those written by Philip's queen, Olympia, to her husband. These the Athenians transmitted immediately to Philip, with the seals unbroken. In the same war, Philip was suspected of having distributed bribes among the Athenian orators. Their houses were ordered to be searched; but with singular regard to decorum, they forbade to break into

* The best sources of information with regard to the general manners of the Athenians, are the *Comedies of Aristophanes*, the *Characters of Theophrastus*, the *Lives of Plutarch*, and the *Orations of Demosthenes*.

the house of Callicles, because he was then newly married. Such was certainly the natural character of the Athenians,—generous, decent, humane, and polished: but the turbulence and inconstancy inseparable from a democratic constitution, often stained their public measures with a character very opposite to the natural disposition of the people. We have more frequent instances of public ingratitude in the single state of Athens, than are to be found perhaps in all the other states and kingdoms of antiquity.*

The capital features of the two great republics of Greece, Sparta and Athens, may be thus briefly delineated. Sparta was altogether a military establishment: every other art was prohibited as unnecessary among individuals, and therefore economy unnecessary, for all was in common. The Lacedæmonians were active only when at war. In peace, their manner of life was languid, uniform, indolent, and insipid. Taught to consider war as the sole honourable or manly occupation, they contracted a rigid and ferocious turn of mind, which distinguished them from all the other states of Greece. Despising the arts themselves, they despised all who cultivated them. Their constitution was fitted to form and to maintain a small, a brave, and an independent state; but had no tendency to produce a great, a polished, or a conquering people.

At Athens, peace was the natural state of the republic; and the institutions of Solon tended to form his fellow citizens for the enjoyment of civil happiness. It was a punishable crime at Athens to be idle, and every citizen was compelled to industry, and to the utmost exertion of his talents. It was not enough that each should choose himself a particular profession. The court of Areopagus inquired into and ascertained the extent of his fields, the amount of his expenditure, and consequently the measure of his industry and economy. The sciences were in contempt at Sparta; but dependent on the arts, and essential to the highest and most

* Plutarch records many anecdotes, which strongly mark the fickleness of the character of the Athenians. The following may serve as an example:—Themistocles intimated in public that he had formed a most important project, but that the success was necessary to insure its success. The people answered, "Let it be told to Aristides alone, and we shall be regulated by his advice." Themistocles acquainted Aristides that the project was to burn the fleet of the combined states, then at anchor in perfect security in the harbor of Pegasus; a scheme which would give Athens the absolute command of Greece. Aristides told the people that nothing could be more advantageous than the project of Themistocles, but nothing at the same time more unjust. The whole assembly with one voice cried out, "Let us have nothing to do with it." This was to feel and to decide with rectitude and propriety. But mark a striking contrast to this honorable decision. A few years afterwards, it was proposed to the Athenians, to violate an article of a treaty formed with the allies of the republic. The people asked the advice of Aristides, who, in the same spirit as before, told them, that the counsel was advantageous, but unjust. The upright statesman had no longer the same influence; the perfidious suggestion was now unanimously approved of.

rational enjoyment of life, they were held at Athens in the greatest honor and esteem. Luxury was the characteristic of the Athenian, as frugality of the Spartan. They were equally jealous of their liberty; because liberty was equally necessary to each, for the enjoyment of his favorite scheme of life. In the best times of both republics, their military character was nearly equal. The bravery of the Spartan sprang from a fostered hardihood, and constitutional ferocity; the courage of the Athenian was derived from the principle of honor. The character of the individual at Athens was humane, polite, equitable, and social; but from a faulty constitution, the character of the public was fickle, inconstant, frivolous, cruel, and ungrateful.

The revenue of the territory of Attica has admitted of various estimations by different authors. The Athenians, at the commencement of their first war with Lacedæmon, before proceeding to vote the necessary supplies for the armament, made a general estimate, as Polybius informs us, of their lands, their houses, and their whole property, which did not quite amount to 6000 talents; a sum equivalent to 1,162,500*l.* sterling. Demosthenes, in one of his orations touching on this subject, makes the value of the land of Attica amount nearly to that sum, exclusive of houses and effects. Many extravagantly suppose this to mean the annual value of the lands; a computation which would make the revenue of Attica, a small territory of sixty miles in length, and thirty broad, exceed the annual coinage of several of the European kingdoms. In ancient Greece, gold and silver bore a much higher proportion to other commodities than they do at present. The same quantity of these metals would, in those times, have purchased in Greece nearly ten times as much of the necessaries of life, or commanded ten times as much labor, as at present in most of the countries of Europe. A strong presumption, therefore, arises, that even the most moderate of those accounts of the census of Attica are much exaggerated.

The Spartan government had acquired solidity, while all the rest of Greece was yet unsettled, and torn by domestic dissensions. Had the Spartans then aspired at extending their dominion, they might with great facility have subdued all Greece. But the ambition of extensive conquest was not agreeable to the spirit of their constitution. Their passion for liberty prompted them rather to assist others in maintaining or asserting their independence; and this generous conduct inspired so high a respect for their equity and moderation, that contending states not unfrequently chose them the umpires of their differences. Yet though this was their general character, there are some instances of their departure, even in those early times, from this generosity of conduct. Their behavior to the Messenians, a neighboring people who solicited their aid in war, was extremely dishonorable. They took advantage of their weakness, to reduce this unfortunate people to

the condition of slaves, as they had before done by the Helots. It was contrary to their laws to communicate to strangers the rights of citizenship: and we have before remarked, that when the number of their slaves increased, gave room to apprehend danger to the state, it was customary to reduce them by a general massacre.

While the power of Sparta was thus high among the states of Peloponnesus, Athens, a prey to faction and civil discord, was for a while threatened with the entire loss of that liberty which she had scarcely begun to enjoy. Pisistratus, a relation of Solon, a man of splendid talents, highly popular from his wealth and liberality, began secretly to aspire at the sovereign power. He propagated a report, that his enemies, jealous of his asserting the rights of the people, had endeavored to assassinate him; and on that pretence demanded a guard for the protection of his person, which he employed in seizing the citadel. The Athenians submitted without much opposition. Solon, indignant at the unworthy conduct of his kinsman, attempted to revive the patriotic spirit of his countrymen, and urge the recovery of their freedom: but he met with no support; and the aged lawgiver, unable to brook the degradation of his country, bade adieu to Athens, and died in voluntary exile.

A considerable party of the citizens, however, were secretly hostile to the usurpation of Pisistratus. The faction of the Alcmæonidæ, of whom the chiefs were Megacles and Lycurgus, gained at length so much strength as to attack and expel the usurper from the city. The stratagem by which he regained his power is a singular instance of the force of superstition. He procured a beautiful female to personate the goddess Minerva. Seated on a lofty chariot, she drove into the city, while her attendants proclaimed aloud that their tutelary deity had deigned in person to visit them, and to demand the restoration of her favorite Pisistratus. A general acclamation hailed the auspicious presence, and all paid obedience to the heavenly summons. Pisistratus thus restored was a second time expelled by the faction of the Alcmæonidæ, and remained for eleven years in exile. But the talents and the virtues of this extraordinary man, for such he really possessed, had gained him many friends; and with their aid he finally triumphed over all his enemies. His return to Athens was marked by a proclamation of general pardon to all who had opposed him, and chose quietly to return to their allegiance; and he regained at once, and continued during the remainder of his life to possess, the favor and affection of the people; leaving at his death a peaceable crown to his sons Hippias and Hipparchus.

Pisistratus was a man of elegant talents, and a zealous encourager of literature. He patronized Simonides and other contemporary poets; and he conferred a memorable service on his country and on the world, by collecting and publishing the hitherto scattered fragments of the poems of Homer.

Pisistratus, much to his honor, had made no alteration on the forms of the republic as established by Solon; and his sons, who inherited their father's spirit and dispositions, trod in his footsteps. Thucydides informs us, that the only mark of their ascendency in the state was the appointment of their friends and partisans to the chief offices of the republic. Plato has celebrated the character of Hipparchus as one of the most perfect to be found in history. His principal aim seems to have been to polish and improve his countrymen, by encouraging and cultivating the liberal arts and fostering the literary spirit; while his brother Hippias bent his attention to the finances of the republic, the enlargement and embellishment of the city, and the regulation of its military strength. The circumstances which put an end to their government are variously related by historians: but they agree in this fact, that it was private revenge, and no motive of state policy or patriotism, that incited Harmodius and Aristogiton to conspire their death. The common story is, that Hipparchus having debauched the sister of Harmodius, and afterwards affronted her while she walked in a public procession, her brother, in revenge for this atrocious injury, with the aid of his friend Aristogiton, conspired and effected the death of the aggressor. At the celebration of the feast of Minerva, Harmodius attacked and killed Hipparchus, but was himself massacred in the attempt. The character and temper of Hippias, hitherto mild and amiable, underwent a change from the period of his brother's fate. Fear and suspicion made him assume a severity of conduct contrary to his nature; and an extreme rigor in the punishment of all whom he dreaded or suspected, soon rendered his government as odious as it had once been popular.

The faction of the Alcmæonidæ, who had once succeeded in dethroning Pisistratus, had, upon his restoration, been expelled and banished Attica. They now planned the dethronement of Hippias, and found the temper of the Athenians favorable to their wishes. The oracle of Delphos was bribed, in order to procure them the aid of the Lacedæmonians. The Pythia continually prophesied, that Sparta would fail in all her enterprises, till she merited the favor of the gods, by delivering Athens from the tyranny of the Pisistratidæ. The Lacedæmonians accordingly declared war, and invaded Attica, headed by their king Cleomenes. Athens surrendered to a superior force, and Hippias, driven into banishment, retired to Sigeum, on the Hellespont. The freedom of the city, thus ingloriously restored, was celebrated with high festivity, and statues were erected to the honor of Harmodius and Aristogiton, as the authors of their country's deliverance from tyranny.

But the popular government was scarcely thus re-established, when it sustained a new assault from Cleisthenes, one of the Alcmæonidæ, who, on the ascendency of the prevailing faction,

had sought to act a similar part with Pisistratus and his sons. He found, however, a powerful rival in Isagoras, who cherished the same ambitious views; and who, with the aid of Cleomenes and the Spartans, expelled Clisthenes and drove with him into banishment no less than seven hundred of the principal Athenian families. The selfish schemes of Isagoras were first manifested in an attempt to abolish the senate, or to change all its members and abridge their number. A proceeding thus violent and impolitic roused the people at once. They drove Cleomenes and his Spartans, together with Isagoras, out of Athens, and recalled Clisthenes with the whole of the exiled families.

The Lacedæmonians, indignant at this disgrace of their king and countryman, were now wholly bent on revenge. A principal means appeared to be the re-establishment of Hippias, and for that purpose the other states of Greece, and particularly Corinth, were urged to join in the enterprise. But Corinth loved her own liberty, and respected that of others. She refused to accede to the alliance; and the rest of the states followed her example.

Hippias, disappointed of that aid he expected from the jealousy entertained by the petty states of the predominance of Athens, now looked towards a foreign alliance. Darius, the son of Hystaspes, under whom the Persian empire was splendid and flourishing, meditated, at this juncture, the conquest of Greece. Hippias disgracefully availed himself of the views of an enemy against the general liberty of his country, and courted the assistance of Artaphernes, the Persian governor of Sardes, to re-establish him on the throne of Athens. Artaphernes eagerly embraced a proposal, which promised officiously to second the views of his sovereign; and Greece now saw herself inevitably involved in a war with Persia.

The subject of the war with Persia naturally induces a retrospective view of the origin of this monarchy; its ancient history, and the government, policy, and manners of this great empire; a field of inquiry on which we shall enter in the following chapter.

# CHAPTER XI.

ORIGIN OF THE PERSIAN MONARCHY—End of the first Assyrian Empire—Era of Nabonassar—Monarchy of the Medes; Dejoces, Phraortes, Cyaxares, Nabopolassar—Nabuchodonozor II.—Captivity of the Jews—Cyrus the elder—Cambyses—Darius, son of Hystaspes—Conquest of Babylon—His War against the Scythians—His conquest of India—Government, Customs, and Manners of the Persians—Education of their Princes—General Education of the Persian Youth—National Character of the Persians—Military Character—Government—Administration of Justice—Religion of the Ancient Persians—Zoroaster: Uncertainty of his History—The Second Zoroaster—Translation of the Zendavesta by Anquetil—Cosmogony of the Zendavesta—Manicheism—Practical and Moral parts of the Persian Religion—The Sadder—Change in the Manners of the Persians—State of Greece at the time of the Persian War.

HAVING pursued, in some of the preceding chapters, the general outlines of the history of Greece, from the time when the leading republics of Sparta and Athens had assumed a fixed and regular constitution, to the commencement of the Persian war, I now propose, in conformity with the plan laid down in the beginning of this work, to look back to the origin of the Persian monarchy, to delineate very briefly the early periods of its history, and to exhibit a general view of the government, genius, policy, and manners of this ancient people. Such a retrospect will serve to throw light upon their subsequent history, and familiarize us to their acquaintance when, under Darius, the son of Hystaspes, Xerxes, Artaxerxes, Darius Ochus, and Codomannus, we see the force of that splendid empire opposed to the valor and intrepidity of Greece.

It will be recollected that the first empire of the Assyrians ended under Sardanapalus, when Arbaces, governor of the Medes, and Belesis, governor of Babylon, shook off the yoke of that effeminate prince. Three monarchies arose from the ruins of that empire—that of Nineveh, or the second Assyrian empire, that of Babylon, and that of the Medes.

To Belesis succeeded Nabonassar, whose accession to the throne is the beginning of an astronomical era, called the Era of Nabonassar. It is fixed 747 years before Jesus Christ, at which time the Chaldæan astronomical observations began, which have been handed down to us by Ptolemy the geographer. The history of the kings of Babylon succeeding Nabonassar is entirely unknown. That of the monarchs of Nineveh is very little better known, unless by the ravages they committed in Palestine. We read in

Scripture of the conquests of Tiglath-pilezer, whom the impious Achaz, king of Judah, had called to his aid against the Israelites; of the conquests of his son Salmanazar, who carried Hosea and the ten tribes of Israel into captivity; of those of Sennacherib, the son of Salmanazar, who was assassinated by his two elder sons, and succeeded by his third, Esarhaddon. With these general facts we are acquainted from the Holy Scriptures,* and we know that, under this last reign, the kingdom of Babylon was united to that of Nineveh, or the second empire of Assyria.

The monarchy of the Medes, the third of those which sprang from the ruins of the first Assyrian empire, appears to have begun later than the other two; for Dejoces, its first sovereign, mounted the throne the same year with Esarhaddon. The history of this Dejoces is extremely uncertain. He is reported to have built the city of Ecbatan, and to have bestowed much pains in polishing and civilizing his people: yet those laws which he is said to have enacted breathed strongly the spirit of despotism. It was common to the Asiatic monarchs very rarely to show themselves to their subjects. Dejoces is said to have carried the haughtiness of his deportment to an unusual height. It was death only to smile in his presence. We should be inclined to doubt many of those facts which are recorded of the capricious tyranny of some of the eastern monarchs, were they not transmitted to us by the gravest and most authentic of the ancient writers.

Dejoces left the crown of Media to his son Phraortes, who conquered the Persians, and subdued a great part of Asia: but was vanquished at length by Nabuchodonozor I., king of Assyria, made prisoner, and put to death. Cyaxares, the son and successor of Phraortes, in alliance with Nabopolassar, king of Babylon, besieged Nineveh, destroyed that splendid capital, and decided the monarchy between them.

The son of Nabopolassar was Nabuchodonozor II., a prince remarkable in those times for his extensive conquests. Necao (or Pharaoh Necho) king of Egypt, had wrested from the Assyrian monarchy the provinces of Syria and Palestine. They were recovered by Nabuchodonozor and Cyaxares, who, with a vast army of 10,000 chariots, 180,000 foot, and 120,000 horse, invaded and laid waste the country, besieged Jerusalem, and took its king, Jehoiakim, prisoner. Tyre was likewise taken after a siege of ten months. The allied princes divided their conquests; but we are ignorant of the precise shares of each sovereign. To Nabuchodonozor, or, as in Scripture he is named, Nebuchadnezzar, we must assign the dominion of Jerusalem, as it is to him that the seventy years' captivity of the Jews, predicted by Jeremiah, is

* See the Books of Kings, Chronicles, Hosea; likewise Josephus' Hist. and Prideaux Connex.

attributed by the inspired writers. Among the Jewish captives carried by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon was the prophet Daniel, then a youth named Belteshazzar, who attained high favor with the Assyrian monarch, and was made by him ruler of the province of Babylon. From Judæa, Nebuchadnezzar pushed his conquests into Egypt, and, dethroning Pharaoh Necho, gave the government of the country to Amazis. The chronology of these events is extremely confused, and it were a vain and fruitless labor to attempt to fix with precision their orders and series. Nebuchadnezzar II. died after a reign of forty-three years, leaving a monarchy more vast than powerful—an object which offered an easy conquest to the Persians, when Cyrus, their king, raised the Persian empire, hitherto a petty and barbarous dominion, to a height superior to that of all the contemporary nations of the earth.

The name of Cyrus is extremely illustrious among ancient writers; yet nothing can be more uncertain than his history. Herodotus, Ctesias, and Xenophon, the latest of whom was not above two centuries posterior to the supposed age of Cyrus, have given accounts of him so extremely contradictory, that it is quite impossible to reconcile them. The Cyrus of Ctesias and Herodotus obtains possession of the empire of the Medes by dethroning his grandfather Astyages, and, like most extensive conquerors, is the terror and scourge of the human race. The Cyrus of Xenophon fights solely in defence of his uncle Cyaxares, the son of Astyages, and is in every respect the model of a great and virtuous prince. The Cyrus of Herodotus is killed, fighting against Tomyris, the queen of the Massagetæ, who plunges his head into a basin of blood, in revenge of her son, whom Cyrus had put to death. The Cyrus of Ctesias is killed by a wound he received in Hyrcania; and the Cyrus of Xenophon, after a glorious reign of thirty years, dies a natural death. Uncertain as are the particulars of the history of the elder Cyrus, it is generally agreed that his conquests were extensive; that he vanquished the Babylonians; defeated their ally, Crœsus, the king of Lydia, the most powerful of the contemporary sovereigns; subjected a great part of the lower Asia, and made himself master of Syria and Arabia. The policy of such conquerors, who found it impossible to preserve their conquests, was to ruin the countries which they gained by their arms. Devastation was held to be the natural right of war. Those princes had no plan in their military enterprises—chance directed their course. Nebuchadnezzar II., whom we have seen the conqueror of Judæa and Egypt, is said to have cast lots to determine to which point of the compass he should direct his progress: the lot fell towards Jerusalem; he marched on accordingly, and subdued it.

Cambyses, the son and successor of Cyrus, had neither the talents of his father, nor his virtues. He planned a military expedition into Egypt, which was signalized only by folly and extrava-

gance. His vast army speedily overpowered this feeble people, who have been successively subdued by every nation that attacked them; but the conqueror after all reaped nothing but dishonor; for his conduct was such as to bear every mark of insanity. In an inconsiderate expedition against the Ethiopians, he threw away the greater part of his army: — 50,000 men, sent into the deserts of Ammon, perished through fatigue and famine. With a deliberate purpose of wantonly exasperating the Egyptians, who were disposed to the most peaceable submission, Cambyses ordered the magnificent temple of Thebes to be pillaged and burnt. At the celebration of the festival of Apis, at Memphis, he stabbed the sacred ox with his poniard, ordered the priests to be scourged, and massacred all the people who assisted at the sacrifice. He put to death his brother Smerdis, because he dreamed that he saw him seated on the throne; and when his wife and sister, Meroe, lamented the fate of her brother, he killed her with a stroke of his foot. To prove his dexterity in archery, he pierced the son of his favorite Prexaspes through the heart with an arrow.

This madman was on his return to his dominions of Persia, when he learned that the order of the magi had effected a dangerous revolution; and that, by their aid, one of their own number had assumed the character of his brother Smerdis, and had been elected king in his absence. He hastened to punish this usurpation, but died on his way, from a wound of his poniard, which struck him in the groin while mounting his horse. The false Smerdis did not long enjoy his dignity. Two grandees of the court, Darius the son of Hystaspes, and Otanes, conspired to dethrone him, and the usurper was strangled in the imperial palace. Darius had influence enough to obtain the vacant throne of Persia; though we cannot easily rely on the authority of Herodotus, that he owed his election to the neighing of his horse.

Darius the son of Hystaspes was a prince of talents and ambition: he was the first of the Persian monarchs who imposed a regular tax upon the conquered provinces of the empire, which till then had only given occasional gratuities to the sovereign. He chose, however, to conciliate the great body of his subjects to the new government, by exempting the Persians from those burdens. The Babylonians were the first of the provinces which endeavored to shake off the yoke of servitude; but their attempt cost them extremely dear. Darius encircled Babylon with his army so as to cut off all supplies from the adjacent country. The inhabitants exerted a savage resolution. All who were useless for the defence of the city, and served only to consume its provisions,—the women, the old men, and the children,—were strangled by a public decree; each head of a family being allowed to preserve one of his wives and a maid servant. At length, after a siege of twenty months, Darius won the city by a treacherous stratagem. One of his captains, mutilating his visage with hideous wounds,

fled, as if for safety, to the Babylonians, and offered his services to avenge himself against Darius, who had used him thus inhumanly. The man was trusted by the credulous Babylonians with a high command, of which he availed himself to open the gates to the Persians. With aggravated inhumanity and cruelty Darius impaled alive three thousand of the principal citizens.

Ambitious of extensive conquest, he now meditated a war against the Scythians, on the absurd pretext that they had ravaged a part of Asia about 130 years before. At the head of an army of 700,000 men, he set out from Susa, his capital, to wage war against a nation whom it was impossible to conquer. Detached and wandering tribes, who have scarcely attained an idea of fixed possessions, migrate with ease and celerity from one extremity of a country to the other, and are not to be subdued: while, in the mean time, the invading army, even though unopposed, is consumed of itself by famine and fatigue. The sole business of the Scythians was to retreat, driving their cattle before them, and filling up the wells in their route. The Persians, after long and excessive marches, never got more than a distant sight of the enemy, while they were perishing by thousands in a rugged and barren country. At length Darius thought it his wisest measure to retreat, having lost the greatest part of his army, and leaving behind him the sick and aged at the mercy of the barbarians.

The character of this prince was daring, active, and enterprising. The disastrous event of the Scythian war served only to stimulate him to greater and more glorious attempts. He now projected the conquest of India. The particulars of that enterprise are not preserved in history; but we know that it was successfully accomplished. India was made the twentieth province of the Persian empire. In the course of this war, Darius equipped a fleet upon the Indus, under the command of Scylax, a Greek of Caria, with orders to sail down the river and explore the countries on either side till he arrived at the ocean. Scylax obeyed his instructions, and performed, in the course of his voyage, a navigation perhaps the longest that at this time had been attempted by any nation. From the mouth of the Indus, he sailed through the *Mare Erythræum*,* coasting, as we must presume, by the mouth of the Persian Gulf; and entering the Red Sea by the Sinus Avalates, now the Straits of Babelmandel, he disembarked in Egypt after a voyage of above 1100 leagues.

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The outlines of the Persian monarchy thus shortly traced till

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* The *Mare Erythræum* is not to be confounded with the Red Sea. The latter is the *Sinus Arabicus*; the former is that part of the Indian Ocean which extends between the Straits of Babelmandel and the continent of India. It is said to have been so named from a king called Erythras.

the period of the war with Greece—the government, laws, manners, and customs of this great Asiatic empire demand our attention, as an interesting and curious subject of inquiry.

The government of Persia, from the earliest accounts we have of that nation, was an hereditary monarchy. Their princes were absolute in the most unlimited sense of the expression. Their persons were revered as sacred, and they were never approached by their subjects without the gestures of adoration. Their word, their look conferred life or death; and the displeasure of *The Great King* was equally dreaded with the wrath of the divinity. In the latter and splendid periods of their dominion, the pomp and magnificence of these monarchs, with their necessary concomitants, voluptuousness and debauchery, have been amply described by ancient authors. The revenues of whole provinces, according to Herodotus, were bestowed on the attire of their favorite concubines; and the provinces themselves took from that circumstance their popular appellations. Plato, in his Alcibiades, mentions a Greek ambassador who travelled a whole day through a country called the Queen's Girdle, and another in crossing a province which went by the name of the Queen's Head Dress. The regal throne was of pure gold, overshadowed by a palm-tree and vine of the same metal, with clusters of fruit composed of precious stones.

Yet amidst this wantonness of Asiatic magnificence, the care which those princes bestowed on the education of their children merited the highest praise. They were, almost as soon as born, removed from the palace, and committed to the charge of eunuchs of approved fidelity and discretion. At seven years of age they learned the exercise of riding, and went daily to the chase, to inure them betimes to fatigue and intrepidity. At the age of fourteen they were put under the care of four preceptors eminently distinguished by their wisdom and abilities. The first opened to them the doctrines of the magi; the second impressed them with a veneration for truth; the third exercised them in the habits of fortitude and magnanimity; and the fourth inculcated the most difficult of all lessons, especially to the great, the perfect command and government of their passions.

It is to be observed, that the Persians in general, above every other nation, were noted for their extreme attention to the education of youth. Before the age of five, the children were exclusively under the tuition of the mother and assistant females. After that age, they were committed to the charge of the *magi*, an order of men whose proper function was that of priests or ministers of the national religion, but who spent their lives in the pursuit of wisdom, and the practice of the strictest morality. By their precepts and their example, the Persian youth were early trained to virtue and good morals. They were taught the most sacred regard to truth, the highest veneration for their parents and superiors, the most perfect submission to the laws of their coun-

try, and respect for its magistrates. Nor was the culture of the body neglected. The youth were trained to every manly exercise; a preparative to their admission into the body of the king's guards, in which they were enrolled at the age of seventeen. The general system of education among the Persians is thus laconically described by Herodotus. "From the age of five to that of twenty, they teach their children three things alone—to manage a horse, to use the bow with dexterity, and to speak truth." From these accounts of ancient authors, we might be led to conclude, that a system of education thus plain, left very little to be done on the part of the parents; yet we find in the *Zendavesta* this admirable precept to fathers. "If you desire to enjoy paradise, instruct your children in wisdom and virtue; since all their good deeds will be imputed to you."

The luxury of the Persians, which has become proverbial, must not mislead us in our ideas of their character in the early ages of that monarchy. In reality, before the time of Cyrus, the Persians were a rude and barbarous people, inhabiting a poor and narrow country of rocks and deserts. We have the concurring testimony of all the ancient authors who have written concerning them, that they were, in those early periods, a people remarkable for their temperance, and the virtuous simplicity of their manners. Herodotus records an excellent speech of one Sandanis, a Lydian, who, when his sovereign Cræsus projected the invasion of Persia, thus strongly pointed out to him the folly of his enterprise: "What will you gain," said he, "by waging war with such men as the Persians? Their clothing is skins, their food wild fruits, and their drink water. If you are conquered, you lose a cultivated country; if you conquer them, what can you take from them?—a barren region. For my part, I thank the gods, that the Persians have not yet formed the design of invading the Lydians."

The use of gold and silver for money was unknown to the Persians till the reign of Darius, the son of Cyaxares, or, as he is called in Scripture, *Darius the Mede*. The reign of this prince was, indeed, the era of their change of manners. The Medes, conquered by the Persians, became the models of their manners, as we shall see did the Greeks to the Romans. The ancient Persians were a warlike and a hardy race of men. They were all trained to the use of arms; and in time of war, every male, unless disabled by age or bodily infirmity, was obliged, on pain of death, to attend the monarch in the field. Hence those immense armies whose numbers almost exceed belief, and which were, of necessity, disorderly and unmanageable, as they never could act with the uniform operation of a well-organized body. While on service they wore complete armor, composed of loose plates of metal, fashioned in the form of the scales of fishes, which covered the whole body, arms, legs, thighs and feet. Their weapons were a bow of uncommon length, a quiver of arrows, a short sword,

called *acinacis*, and a shield made of wicker. Their horses were covered with the same scaly armor; and they employed war-chariots with scythes fixed at the extremity of the axles. They received no other pay than a share of the conquered spoil. In their military expeditions, the wives and children, with a large retinue of male and female slaves, followed the camp; an usage which we are apt to attribute to luxury and effeminacy, when we ought rather, perhaps, to account it a remnant of barbarous manners. in fight, the ancient Persians displayed great personal courage. They esteemed it dishonorable to employ any stratagems in war; and never fought in the night, unless when attacked by the enemy.

We find in the government of the ancient Persians, though extremely despotical, some particular institutions of uncommon excellency. The kingdom was divided into districts or separate provinces, over each of which presided a governor or *satrap*, who received his instructions immediately from the prince, and was obliged, at stated times, to give an account of his administration. To facilitate this intercourse between the provinces and the capital, the establishment of regular couriers or posts, a piece of policy of no ancient date in the kingdoms of Europe, was known in Persia at the time of Cyrus. The sovereign likewise appointed his commissioners to perform periodical circuits through the empire, and report to him every particular relative to the government of the satraps; and he frequently visited in person even the most distant provinces.

The encouragement of agriculture, the spring of population, and therefore one of the most important objects of attention in all governments where there is an extent of territory, was peculiarly the care of the monarchs of Persia. To cultivate the earth was one of the precepts of their sacred books; and the industry of the people, thus recommended by the sanction of a religious duty, was encouraged by the sovereign with suitable rewards, and remissness punished by a proportional increase of taxes. We are informed that, on one particular day in the year, the king partook in person of the feast of the husbandmen.

There were, under the Persian government, some regulations regarding the administration of justice, which are highly deserving of encomium. The rigor of penal laws often defeats its own purpose, for if the punishment exceeds its just measure, and the criminal becomes an object of pity, the influence of punishment as an example is in a great measure defeated; and offences, instead of being strictly coerced, will often be screened from the too severe vengeance of the law. In Persia, a first offence was never capitally punished. That vengeance was reserved only for the hardened and incorrigible criminal. In all cases the accused person was brought face to face with his accuser, who, if he failed to make good his charge, was himself condemned to the punishment which the accused must have undergone had the crime been

proved against him. The sovereign, in certain causes of importance, sat himself to judgment; though in the ordinary administration of justice, there were a certain number of judges chosen, on account of their acknowledged wisdom and probity, who made regular circuits through the provinces, and attended the sovereign in his stated visitations of his dominions. These held their offices for life: but were removable in cases of malversation. The story is well known of the judge, who, being guilty of corruption in his high function, was by Cambyses commanded to be flayed alive, and his skin hung over the seat of judgment.

There are few topics of antiquarian research which have been explored with more anxiety of investigation than the religion of the ancient Persians. The mind is naturally stimulated to inquire into a system of theology, which is not less remarkable for the purity of its moral precepts than for its extreme antiquity; as we have undoubted evidence that the same doctrines and worship which exist among a particular sect of the Persians at this day were the religion of this ancient people some thousand years ago.

The founder of this ancient religion is generally supposed to have been Zoroaster, as he is called by the Greeks, or Zerdusht, as he is denominated by the Persians: but the history of this personage is involved in much uncertainty. By some authors he is said to have lived before the time of Moses (A. C. 1571;) by others to have been contemporary with Ninus and Semiramis (A. C. 1216;) and by others again his era is placed as late as the accession of Darius, the son of Hystaspes, to the throne of Persia (A. C. 522.) These discordances have induced a supposition, that there were two remarkable persons of the name of Zoroaster; and this, which is the opinion of the elder Pliny, has been lately supported with many probable reasons by the Abbé Foucher. According to his account, the older Zoroaster was regarded by the Persians as the founder of their religion; while the younger of that name was only a zealous reformer of the ancient worship from the many superstitions with which, in course of time, it had become corrupted. To the first Zoroaster is attributed the composition of the *Zendavesta*, a collection of books which he pretended, like the Roman Numa, to have received from heaven. These books he presented to his sovereign Gustasp, the king of Bactriana; and confirmed their authority, and his own divine mission, by performing, as is said, some very extraordinary miracles. Gustasp became a convert, and abjured, along with the greater part of his subjects, the worship of the stars, represented by several idols, which was then the prevalent religion of those countries, and was termed *Sabaism*. Gustasp became so zealous a proselyte to the new faith, that he refused to pay an annual tribute to a prince of Scythia, unless on the condition that he likewise should renounce his idolatry; a request which the Scythian deemed so insolent, that he invaded Bactriana with an immense army, sacked the city

of Balk, destroyed the *Pyreum*, or Fire-Temple, in which Zoroaster officiated, and put him to death, together with eighty of the magi,* whose blood, as is reported, drowned out the sacred fire. But Gustasbp had his revenge; for, collecting all his forces, he attacked and routed the Scythians with immense slaughter, regained his kingdom, and re-establishing the Pyreum of Zoroaster, put his religion upon a settled foundation.

The second Zoroaster appears with less splendor. He pretends to no other character than that of a zealous reformer, concerned for the ancient purity of his religion, which, in the course of many ages from the time of its founder, had become considerably corrupted. The whole order of the magi had, in the time of Cambyses, fallen into disrepute. We have seen how, from a very dishonorable imposition in substituting one of their own number for Smerdis, the brother of Cambyses, whom that madman had put to death, they had incurred the odium of the whole nation. This event is said to have thrown a stain upon the religion of the Zendavesta, which was not wiped off till a reformation was operated by Darius, the son of Hystaspes. This prince was zealously attached to the ancient religion of Zoroaster; but knowing the unpopularity of the race of magi then existing, he abolished them entirely, and created a new order, at the head of which was the second Zerdusht or Zoroaster. He is believed to have been originally a Jew, or at least a person educated in Judea; whence he has grafted on the religion of the Persians a great deal of the doctrines of the Old Testament, both regarding the creation of the world, and the precepts of religion.

The Zendavesta, therefore, in the form in which it now appears, must be considered as a work of which the basis claims a most remote antiquity; while even what addition or improvement it received from the younger Zoroaster is of a date so ancient as 500 years before the birth of Christ.

This code of the ancient religion of the Persians, so remarkable for its antiquity, was, till lately, unknown, unless from some abstracts of its doctrines made by a few learned men who were

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* The *magi* among the Persians were a class of men, who, like an established order of priesthood, exercised all the public functions of religion, and passed their time exclusively in those sacred duties, and in the cultivation of philosophy. Whether they were originally instituted by Zoroaster, as the priests of his religion, or subsisted before his time, while Sabaism was the religion of the Persians, is uncertain. They were not elected from the body of the people, but formed a distinct class or race of men — the children of the magi succeeding to the function of their fathers; and being debarred from intermarrying with the people, these children are said to have been frequently the fruit of incestuous intercourse.— *Bruckeri Inst. Hist Phil.* p. 49. They held a great many mysterious and abstruse doctrines, which they communicated only to the disciples of their own order, but made it likewise their employment to educate the youth of superior rank, and particularly the princes of royal descent, and to instruct them in morality and useful knowledge.

conversant in oriental literature. But it has been lately translated by a Frenchman, M. Anquetil de Perron, whose enthusiasm prompted him to undertake a journey to Persia, in order to explore every trace of that ancient religion. This translation has not contributed to raise the reputation of the Zendavesta. We find in it some excellent moral precepts, and a few sublime truths accidentally breaking out amidst a mass of absolute nonsense and incoherent raving. Those, however, who, with a strong prejudice in its favor, have endeavored to make a critical analysis of the work, and to methodize its opinions and doctrines, pretend to find in it not only a philosophical account of the origin of the world, but the purest principles of religion and morality, together with a code of laws for the regulation of civil society.

The cosmogony of the Zendavesta, according to the account of those expositors, supposes the first principle of all things to be time without bounds, or *eternity*. From this first principle proceed (but in what manner is not explained) the first *light*, the first *water*, and the original *fire*. From this first principle likewise spring *Ormusd* and *Ahriman*, secondary principles, but active and creative of all things: Ormusd, a being infinitely good, and Ahriman, a being infinitely wicked. The duration of this world is limited to 12,000 years; a space of time which is equally divided between Ormusd and Ahriman, who maintain a constant war for the sovereignty of created nature, and alternately prevail during the period of the duration of the universe; but the contest is to be finally terminated by the triumph of Ormusd over Ahriman; good must subdue evil.

In the meantime, for maintaining their warfare, Ormusd creates an immense number of *good genii*, and his opponent an equal number of *evil* ones. Ormusd then proceeds to the creation of a perfect world; but is continually thwarted in his purpose, and has his works contaminated, by the malignant interference of his adversary. Ormusd creates a *bull*, out of the body of which spring first all the different kinds of plants, and then all the various species of animals; man among the rest. But in this formation of the bull, Ahriman has likewise a joint operation; so that man, intended to be formed pure, uncorrupted, and immortal, has within him the seeds of impurity, corruption, and death. He deviates, of course, from the path of rectitude, and falls from his pristine innocence. His first offence is the neglect to pay a proper veneration to Ormusd under the symbol of water; a crime which entails sin and mortality against all the descendants of the aggressor, and gives a great triumph to Ahriman and his *evil genii*.

These contentions between the good and the evil principle are supposed to endure till the accomplishment of Time. Man becomes subject to death in consequence of his sins; but when the period arrives, that the whole inhabitants of the earth shall be converted to the religion of Zoroaster, then shall be the resurrec-

tion of the dead with their earthly bodies and souls. The just shall be separated from the unjust; the former to be translated to Paradise, where they shall enjoy the highest pleasures, both of soul and body; the latter to be purified for an appointed space in burning metals, and cleansed from all their offences; after which, all created beings shall enjoy the most perfect happiness for ever. Ahriman and his evil genii shall undergo the same purification; and after his limited punishment, even he shall partake of the joys of eternity, repeat the Zendavesta, and join with all beings in the praises of Ormusd.

This doctrine of the two separate and eternal principles, a good and an evil, has had its advocates among many other religious sects besides the ancient Persians. It seems to be a natural effort of unenlightened reason to afford a solution of that great problem, the origin of evil. It was revived in the third century of the Christian era by a sect of heretics named Manichees,* whose doctrine the sceptical Bayle has defended with much dangerous sophistry. But his arguments, and all others that are applicable to this controversy, tend to nothing else than to convince us of the imperfection of human reason, and the vain folly of man's pretences to subject to his limited understanding the schemes of Providence, or reconcile in every instance those anomalies which appear in the structure both of the physical and moral world.

Such is the system of cosmogony contained in these books of the Zendavesta, upon which the whole religion of the ancient *Parsi* was founded. The practical part of this religion, consisted, first, in acknowledging and adoring Ormusd, the principle of all good, by a strict observance of purity in thought, words, and actions: secondly, in showing a proportional detestation of Ahriman, his productions, and his works. The most acceptable service to Ormusd was observing the precepts of the Zendavesta, reading that work, and repeating its liturgies. The chief among its forms of prayer are addressed not directly to Ormusd, but through the medium of his greatest works, the sun, the moon, and stars.

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* This sect arose about A. D. 277, and took its origin from one of the Persian Magi, named *Manes*. He professed to believe in Christianity, and in the principal doctrines of the New Testament, rejecting altogether the Old Testament, which he maintained was one of the delusions which had sprung from Ahriman, or *the evil principle*, for the purpose of keeping mankind in darkness, ignorance, and vice. For that reason, it was, as he maintained, that in the course of the contest which always subsists between *the good and the evil principles* — the good principle, under the person of Mithras or Christ, had abrogated the Old Testament, and revealed his perfect religion and worship in the New. Yet though the Manichees professed to receive the New Testament, they adopted in reality only what suited their own opinions. They formed a peculiar scheme of Christianity, which was mingled with many of the doctrines of the Magi, and whatever parts of the New Testament they found to be inconsistent with their scheme, they boldly affirmed to be corruptions and interpolations. This sect of the Manichees subsisted for many centuries, and even some of the earlier fathers of the Christian church were contaminated with its errors.

Mithras the sun, of all the productions of Ormusd, is supposed to be the most powerful antagonist of Ahriman. After these celestial objects, the terrestrial elements have the next claim to worship and veneration. Of these, the noblest is the fire, the symbol of the sun, and of the original heat which pervades all nature. The fire was therefore reckoned the purest material symbol of the divinity. The other elements of air, earth, and water, had each a [illegible] to claim; and it was an object of the most zealous care of the ancient Parsi, to keep them pure and uncorrupted. But this worship of the fire and the other elements was always inferior and subordinate to the adoration of Ormusd, with whose praises all their religious ceremonies began and ended.

But the object of these books of the Zendavesta was not only to reveal the divinity, and the knowledge of his works, and that peculiar worship which was most acceptable to him: they contained likewise a system of moral duties, and of civil regulations. These moral precepts and regulations are better known from the *Sadder*, a compilation made about three centuries ago by the modern Parsi, or Guebres, in which a great many of the absurdities contained in the Zendavesta are rejected or omitted.

From the Sadder, according to the analysis of it by M. Foucher, it appears that the principle of the morality of the Parsi was a sort of Epicurism. The indulgence of the passions was recommended, in so far as it is consistent with the welfare of society; and reprobated only when destructive or subversive of it. There is no merit annexed to abstinence or mortification: those extremes are equally reprobated with intemperance and debauchery. Adultery was held criminal, and so was celibacy or virginity. Murder, theft, violence, and injustice were crimes highly offensive to God, because destructive to the happiness of man. To cultivate an untilled field, to plant fruit-trees, to destroy noxious animals, to bring water to a dry and barren land, were all actions beneficial to mankind, and therefore most agreeable to the divinity, who wills perpetually the highest happiness of his creatures.

In a word, this religion of Zoroaster, delivered in the books of the Zendavesta, and abridged in the Sadder, which is still the code of belief and of worship among the Guebres, a sect of the modern Persians, appears to contain, along with a very erroneous system of theology, and amidst a mass of unfathomable incongruities and absurdities, some very striking truths, and many precepts of morality and practical rules of conduct which would do honor to the most enlightened Christians.

I have thus endeavored to give some idea of the genius and character of the ancient Persians, who were a people remarkable for a temperance and simplicity of manners, very different from the character they assumed after they had become a great and conquering nation. No people was ever more prone to adopt

foreign customs or foreign manners. They no sooner subdued the Medes than they assumed their dress; after conquering Egypt, they used the Egyptian armor; and after becoming acquainted with the Greeks, they imitated them, as Herodotus informs us, in the worst of their vices. But that they were originally a very different people, all ancient authors bear concurring testimony.

At the time when they engaged in the war with Greece, their national character had undergone an entire change. They were a people corrupted by luxury: their armies, immense in their numbers, were a disorderly assemblage of all the tributary nations they had subdued; Medes, Assyrians, Babylonians, Egyptians, mingled with the native Persians; a discordant mass, of which the component parts had no tie of affection which bound them to a common interest.

Athens at this time had asserted her liberty by the expulsion of the Pisistratidæ, and was disposed to put a high value on her newly purchased freedom. The power and strength of the republic were at this time very considerable. Luxury had not yet spread her contagion on the public manners; and the patriotic flame was fervent in all ranks of the people. Even the slaves, who, as we before remarked, formed the chief mass of the population of the state, were an active and serviceable body of men; for being ever treated with humanity by the free citizens, they felt an equal regard for the common interest, and on every occasion of war armed with the spirit of citizens for the defence of their country. The Lacedæmonians had the same love of liberty, the same ardor of patriotism, and were yet more accustomed to warfare than the Athenians. In the contest with Persia, the spirit of the Greeks was raised to its utmost pitch; and it is in fact from this era that the Greeks, as an united people, begin to occupy the chief place in the history of the nations of antiquity.

# BOOK THE SECOND

## CHAPTER I.

HISTORY OF GREECE, continued—Origin and cause of the WAR WITH PERSIA —Commencement of hostilities—Battle of Marathon—Miltiades—Aristides —Themistocles—Invasion of Greece by Xerxes—Banishment of Aristides—[illegible]—Salamis—Plataea and Mycale—Decline of the Greeks—Cimon —Pericles—Decline of the patriotic spirit.

HAVING in the last chapter given a short retrospective view of the origin of the Persian monarchy, and the outlines of its history down to the period of the war with Greece—together with a brief account of the government, manners, laws, and religion of the ancient Persians;—we now proceed to carry on the detail of the Grecian history, by shortly tracing the progress and issue of that important war, which may be said to have owed its origin to the ambition of Darius the son of Hystaspes, heightened by the passion of revenge. The Ionians, a people of the lesser Asia, originally a Greek colony, had, with the other colonies of Æolia and Caria, been subdued by Crœsus, and annexed to his dominions of Lydia. On the conquest of Lydia by Cyrus, those provinces of course became a part of the great empire of Persia. They were impatient, however, of this state of subjection, and eagerly sought to regain their former freedom. For this purpose, they sought the aid of their ancient countrymen of Greece, applying first to Lacedæmon, then considered as the predominant power; but, being unsuccessful in that quarter, they made the same demand, with better success, on Athens and the islands of the Ægean Sea. Athens and the islands equipped and furnished the Ionians with twenty-five ships of war, which immediately began hostilities on every city on the Asian coast that acknowledged the government of Persia. We remarked in a former chapter,* that after the expulsion of the Pisistratidæ from Athens, Hippias, the last of

* Book i. chap. x. *in fine.*

that family, betook himself to the Lacedæmonians, who, pleased with the opportunity of harassing their rival state, had ineffectually endeavored to form a league with the other nations of Greece for replacing Hippias on the throne of Athens. As this project soon became abortive, Hippias had recourse himself for aid to Artaphernes, the Persian governor of Lydia, then resident at Sardis, its capital city. This satrap eagerly embraced a scheme which coincided with the views of his master Darius, who, enraged at the revolt of the Ionians, and the aid they had found from Athens and the Greek islands, meditated nothing less than the conquest of all Greece. The Ionians, with their Athenian allies, ravaged and burnt the city of Sardis, destroying the magnificent temple of Cybele, the tutelary goddess of the country; but the Persians defeated them with great slaughter, and compelled the Athenians hastily to re-embark their troops at Ephesus, glad to make the best of their way to Greece. This insult, however, sunk deep into the mind of Darius, and from that moment he vowed the destruction of Greece. That his resolution might suffer no delay or abatement, he caused a crier to proclaim every day when he sat down to table, "Great sovereign, remember the Athenians." Previously to the commencement of his expedition, he sent, according to a national custom, two heralds into the country which he intended to invade, who, in their master's name, demanded earth and water, the usual symbols of subjection. The insolence of this requisition provoked the Athenians and Spartans into a violation of the law of civilized nations. They granted the request of the ambassadors by throwing one of them into a ditch, and the other into a well.*

Many others, however, of the cities of Greece, and all the islands, intimidated by the great armament of Darius, to which they had nothing effectual to oppose, sent the tokens of submission. But the Persian fleet of three hundred ships, commanded by Mardonius, being wrecked in doubling the promontory of Mount Athos, (a peninsula which juts out into the Ægean from the southern coast of Macedonia,) this disaster gave spirits to the inhabitants of the islands, who now returned to their allegiance to the mother country, and cheerfully exerted all their powers in a vigorous opposition to the common enemy.

A new fleet of 600 sail was now equipped by Darius, which began hostilities by an attack on the isle of Naxos. Its principal city, with its temples, was burnt to the ground, and the inhabitants were sent in chains to Susa. Many of the other islands underwent the same fate; and an immense army was landed in Eubœa, which, after plundering and laying waste the country, poured

* Herodot. l. vii. c. 133.

down with impetuosity upon Attica. It was conducted by Datis, a Median who, under the guidance of Hippias, first drew on towards Marathon, a small village near the coast, and within ten miles of the city of Athens.

The Athenians, in this critical juncture, armed to a man. Even the slaves of the republic were enrolled, and cheerfully gave their services for the common defence of the country. A hasty demand of aid was made upon the confederate states, but the suddenness of the emergency left no time for effectually answering it. The Platæans sent a thousand men, the whole strength of their small city. The Spartans delayed to march, from an absurd superstition of beginning no enterprise till after the full moon. The Athenians, therefore, may be said to have stood alone to repel this torrent. The armies of Persia, when they met, were 10,000 men; the army of the Persians consisted of 100,000 foot and 10,000 horse — a vast inequality.

The Athenians, with a very injudicious policy, had given the command of the army to ten chiefs, with equal authority. The mischiefs of this divided power were soon perceived. Happily, among these commanders was one man of superior powers of mind, in whose abilities and wisdom all the rest by common consent paid a becoming deference. This was Miltiades. The Athenians for some time deliberated whether it was their best policy to shut themselves up in the city, and there sustain the attack of the Persians, or to take the field. The former measure could only have been thought of in regard of their great inferiority in numbers to the assailing foe. But there is scarcely an inequality of force that may not be compensated by resolution and intrepidity. By the counsel of Miltiades and Aristides, it was resolved to face the enemy in the field. Aristides, when it was his turn to command, yielded his authority to Miltiades; and the other chiefs, without scruple, followed his example.

Miltiades drew up his little army at the foot of a hill, which covered both the flanks, and frustrated all attempts to surround him. They knew the alternative was victory or death, and that all depended on a vigorous effort to be made in one moment: for a lengthened conflict was sure destruction. The Greeks, therefore, laying aside all missile weapons, trusted every thing to the sword. At the word of command, instead of the usual discharge of javelins, they rushed at once upon the enemy with the most desperate impetuosity. The disorder of the Persians, from this furious and unexpected assault, was instantly perceived by Miltiades, and improved to their destruction by a charge made by both the wings of the Athenian army, in which with great judgement he had placed the best of his troops. The army of the Persians was broken in a moment: their immense numbers increased their confusion, and the whole were put to flight. A great carnage ensued. Six thousand three hundred were left dead on the field of Marathon; and among

these the ignoble Hippias, whose criminal ambition would have sacrificed and enslaved his country. The Athenians, in this day of glory, lost only a hundred and ninety men. The Spartans came the day after the battle, to witness the triumph of their rival state.

The event of this remarkable engagement dissipated the terror of the Persian name; and this first successful experiment of their strength was a favorable omen to the Greeks of the final issue of the contest. With presumptuous confidence, the Persians had brought marble from Asia to erect a triumphal monument on the subjugation of their enemies. The Athenians caused a statue of Nemesis, the Goddess of Vengeance, to be formed out of this marble, by the celebrated Phidias; and tablets to be erected, on which were recorded the names of the heroes who had fallen in the fight. Among the Arundelian marbles at Oxford is a *Psephisma*, or decree, of the people of Athens, published on occasion of the battle of Marathon. The Athenians likewise caused a large painting to be executed by Panænus, the brother of Phidias, in which Miltiades was represented at the head of his fellow chiefs haranguing the army. This was the first emotion of Athenian gratitude to the man who had saved his country. But merit, the more it was eminent and illustrious, became the more formidable, or, to use a juster phrase, the more the object of envy and detraction to this fickle people. Miltiades, charged with the command of reducing some of the revolted islands, executed his commission with honor, with respect to most of them; but he was unsuccessful in an attack against the isle of Paros. He was dangerously wounded; the enterprise miscarried; and he returned to Athens. With the most shocking ingratitude he was capitally tried for treason, on an accusation brought against him by his political antagonist Xanthippus, of his having taken Persian gold to betray his country. Unable, from his wound, to appear in person, his cause was ably pleaded in the Ecclesia by his brother Tisagoras; but all he could obtain was a commutation of the punishment of death into a fine of fifty talents (about 9,400*l.* sterling,) a sum which being utterly unable to pay, he was thrown into prison, where he died of his wounds.

The Persian monarch, meantime, had been only the more exasperated by his bad success; and he now prepared to invade Greece with all the power of Asia. It was the fortune of Athens, notwithstanding her ingratitude, still to nourish virtuous and patriotic citizens. Such was Aristides, who, at this important period, had the greatest influence in conducting the affairs of the republic; a man of singular abilities, whose extreme moderation, and a mind superior to all the allurements of selfish ambition, had deservedly fixed on him the epithet of THE JUST.

Themistocles, who, in many respects, was of a very opposite character from Aristides, was the jealous rival of his honors and

reputation. Both of those eminent men sought the glory of their country; the one from a disinterested spirit of virtuous patriotism, the other from the ambitious desire of unrivalled eminence in that state which he laboured successfully to aggrandize. Themistocles bent his whole attention, in this critical situation of his country, to ward off the storm which he saw threatened from Persia. Sensible that a powerful fleet was the first object of importance for the defence of a country every where open to invasion from the sea, he procured the profits of the silver mines belonging to the republic to be employed in equipping an armament of a hundred long galleys.*

In this interval happened the death of Darius: he was succeeded by his son Xerxes, whom he had by Atossa, the daughter of Cyrus. The heir of his father's ambition, but not of his abilities, Xerxes adopted with impetuosity the project of the destruction of Greece, and armed an innumerable multitude — as Herodotus says, above five millions of men — for that expedition; a calculation utterly incredible — but which serves at least to mark a number, though uncertain, yet altogether prodigious. The error of this estimate becomes palpable, when we attend to the number of ships by which this force was to be transported. These were twelve hundred ships of war, and three thousand transports.

The impatience of Xerxes could not brook the delay that would have attended the transportation of this immense body of land forces in his fleet across the Ægean, which is a very dangerous navigation, or even by the narrower sea of the Hellespont. He ordered a bridge of boats to be constructed between Sestos and Abydos, a distance of seven furlongs (seven eighths of a mile.) This structure was no sooner completed, than it was demolished by a tempest. In revenge of this insult to his power, the directors of the work were beheaded, and the outrageous element itself was punished, by throwing into it a pair of iron fetters, and bestowing three hundred lashes upon the water. After this childish ceremony, a new bridge was built, consisting of a double range of vessels fixed by strong anchors, and joined to each other by immense cables. On this structure the main body of the army passed, in the space of seven days and nights. It was necessary that the fleet should attend the motions of the army; and to avoid a disaster similar to that which had happened to the armament under Mardonius, Xerxes ordered the promontory of Athos to be cut through, by a canal of sufficient breadth to allow two ships to sail abreast. This fact, though confidently asserted by Herodotus, Thucydides, and Diodorus, the first actually contemporary with the event, has yet so much the air of

* The sagacious Themistocles did not disdain to avail himself of the superstitious spirit of his countrymen in aid of his wise precautions. The Delphic Oracle, consulted on the fate of the country, answered that the Greeks would owe their safety to *wooden walls*.

romance, that it has been classed among the fables of ancient history:

> " ——————— creditur olim
> Velificatus Athos, et quicquid Græcia mendax
> Audet in historia :—"

and modern travellers who have surveyed the ground, assert that it exhibits no vestiges of such an operation.

The object of Xerxes' expedition was professedly the chastisement of Athens, for the aid she had given to his revolted subjects of the lesser Asia: but the prodigious force which he set in motion had, beyond doubt, the conquest of all Greece for its real purpose. If Athens then took the principal part in this contest, and finally prevailed in it, we cannot hesitate to assent to the opinion expressed by Herodotus, that to this magnanimous republic all Greece was indebted for her freedom and existence as a nation.

But Athens herself was at this very time the prey of domestic faction, and was divided between the partisans of Themistocles and Aristides. The former could no longer bear the honors and reputation of his rival. By industriously disseminating reports to his prejudice, and representing that very moderation which was the shining feature of his character, as a mere device to gain popularity, and the artful veil of the most dangerous, because the most disguised ambition, he so prejudiced the mind of the people that they insisted for the judgment of the ostracism: the consequence was, that the virtuous Aristides was banished for ten years from his country.

Such was the situation of Athens while Xerxes had mustered his prodigious host upon the plains of Thessaly. The greater part of the states of Greece either stood aloof in this crisis of the national fate, or meanly sent to the Persian monarch the demanded symbols of submission. Even Lacedæmon, though expressing a determined resolution of defence against the common enemy, sent no more effective force to join the Athenian army than three hundred men, but these, as we shall see, were a band of heroes. The Corinthians, Thespians, Plateans, and Æginetes contributed each a small contingent.

Xerxes now proceeded by rapid marches towards the pass of Thermopylæ,* a very narrow defile upon the bay of Malia, which divides Thessaly from the territories of Phocis and Locris. In a council of war, held by the Greeks, it was thought of great importance to attempt at least to defend this pass; and a body of 6000 men being destined for that purpose, Leonidas, one of the kings of Sparta, of high reputation for his cool and deliberate courage,

* This defile was called *Thermopylæ* from the hot springs in its vicinity. It is bounded on the west by high precipices which join the lofty ridge of Mount Oeta, and on the east is terminated by an impracticable morass extending to the sea. Near the plain of the Thessalian city, Trachis, the passage was fifty feet in breadth, but at Alpene, the narrower part of the defile, there was not room for one chariot to pass another.

was appointed to command them on this desperate service. He was perfectly aware that his fate was inevitable, and there are some facts which evince that he and his followers had resolutely determined to devote themselves for their country. An oracle had declared that either Sparta or her king must perish. Plutarch relates that, before leaving Lacedæmon, this chosen band of patriots, with their king at their head, celebrated their own funeral games in the sight of their wives and mothers. When the wife of Leonidas bade adieu, and asked his last commands; "My desire," said he, "is, that you should marry some brave man and bring him brave children." On the morning of the engagement, when Leonidas, exhorting his troops to take some refreshment, said that they should all sup with Pluto, with one accord they set up a shout of joy, as if they had been invited to a banquet. He took his post in the defile with admirable skill, and drew up his little army to the best advantage possible. After some fruitless attempts on the part of the Persians to corrupt the virtue of this noble Spartan, Xerxes imperiously summoned him to lay down his arms. "Let him come," said Leonidas, "and take them." Twenty thousand Medes were ordered to force the defile, but were repulsed with dreadful slaughter by the brave Lacedæmonians. A chosen body of the Persians, dignified with the vain epithet of the *immortals*, met with the same fate. For two whole days, successive bands of that Persian host were put to pieces in making the same attempt. At length, by the treachery of some of the Thessalians who had sold their services to Xerxes, a secret and unfrequented path was pointed out to the Persians, through which a pass might be gained by the army over the mountainous ridge which overhangs the defile; and through this path a great part of the Persian troops penetrated in the night to the opposite plain. The defence of the straits was now a fruitless endeavor; and Leonidas, foreseeing certain destruction, ordered the greater part of his force to retreat with speed and save themselves, while he, with his three hundred Spartans, and a few Thespians and Thebans, determined to maintain their position to the last extremity. Their magnanimous motive was to give the Persians a just idea of the spirit of war for which they were about to subdue. They were all cut off, to one man, who brought the news to Sparta, where he was treated with ignominy as a cowardly fugitive, till he wiped off that disgrace in the subsequent battle of Platæa.

The assembly of the Amphictyons decreed that a monument should be erected at Thermopylæ, on the spot where those brave men had fallen, and that famous inscription to be engraven on it, written by the poet Simonides in the true spirit of Lacedæmonian simplicity:

> Ω ξειν' αγγειλον Λακεδαιμονιοις ότι τηδε
> Κειμεθα τοις κεινων ρημασι πειθομενοι.
>
> "O stranger, tell it to the Lacedæmonians,
> that we lie here in obedience to her precepts."

Xerxes continued his march. It was at this time the period of the celebration of the Olympic games, and the national danger did not interrupt that solemnity; a fact which will admit of very opposite inferences; yet it was interpreted by Xerxes to the honor of the Greeks, for it struck him with the utmost astonishment. The Persian army proceeded without opposition to ravage the country in their progress towards Attica. The territory of Phocis was destroyed with fire and sword; the greater part of the inhabitants flying for shelter to the rocks and caves of that mountainous country. The town of Delphi, famous for its oracle, was a tempting object of plunder, from the treasures accumulated in its temple. These were saved by the laudable artifice of the priests. After ordering the inhabitants of the town to quit their houses, and fly with their wives and children to the mountains, these men, from their skill in that species of legerdemain which can work miracles upon the rude and ignorant, contrived by artificial thunders and lightnings, accompanied with horrible noises, while vast fragments of rock hurled from the precipices, gave all the appearance of an earthquake, to create such terror in the assailing Persians, that they firmly believed the divinity of the place had interfered to protect his temple, and fled with dismay from the sacred territory.

The invading army pursued its march towards Attica. The Greeks now afforded a melancholy proof of that general weakness which characterizes a country parcelled out into small states, each jealous of each other's power, and selfishly attached to its petty interests, in preference even to those concerns which involved the very existence of the nation. The dread of the Persian power, thus in the very act of overwhelming the country, instead of operating a magnanimous union of its strength to resist the common enemy, produced, at this juncture, a quite contrary effect. The rest of the states of Greece, struck with panic, and many of them even siding with the invaders,* seemed determined to leave Athens to her fate, which now appeared inevitable. Themistocles himself, seeing no other safety for his countrymen, counselled them to abandon the city, and betake themselves to their fleet: a melancholy extreme, but, in their present situation, absolutely necessary. Those who from age were incapable of bearing arms, together with the women and children, were hastily conveyed to the islands of Salamis and Ægina. A few of the citizens resolutely determined to remain, and to defend the citadel to the last extremity. They were all cut off, and the citadel burnt to the ground.

Themistocles, to whatever motive his character may incline us

* This disgraceful fact is asserted in express terms by Herodotus, lib. viii. c. 73.

to attribute his conduct, now acted a truly patriotic part. The Spartans had a very small share of the fleet, which belonged principally to the Athenians. With singular moderation, as avowing his own inferiority of skill, Themistocles yielded the command of the fleet to Eurybiades, a Spartan. He made yet a greater effort of patriotism. Forgetting all party jealousies, he publicly proposed the recall, from banishment, of the virtuous Aristides, whose abilities and high character, he foresaw, might, at this important juncture, be of essential service to his country.

Two sea engagements were fought with little advantage on either side; and the Greek fleet retired to the Straits of Salamis, between that island and the coast of Attica.

A woman of a singularly heroic character, Artemisia, queen of Halicarnassus, from a great spirit of enterprise, had joined the fleet of Xerxes with a small squadron which she commanded in person. The prudence of this woman's counsels, had they been followed, might have saved the Persian monarch the disaster and disgrace that awaited him. She recommended Xerxes to confine his operations to the attack of the enemy by land, to employ his fleet only in the supply of the army, and to avoid all engagement with the Grecian galleys, which now contained the chief force of the enemy. But Xerxes and his officers disdained to follow an advice which they judged the result of female timidity; and the compressed position of the Grecian fleet seemed to offer a favorable opportunity for a decisive blow to their armament. The fleet of the Greeks consisted of 380 ships, that of the Persians amounted to 1200 sail. The latter, with decided impetuosity, hastened to the attack; the former waited their assault in perfect order, and with calm and deliberate resolution. A wind sprang up which blew contrary to the fleet of the Persians; and as it thus became necessary to ply their oars with the greater part of their men, their active force was diminished, their motions impeded, and a confusion ensued which gave their enemy a manifest advantage. It was then that the Greeks became the assailants: they raised the *pæan*, or song of victory, and, aided by the wind, dashed forward upon the Persian squadron; the brazen beaks of the triremes overwhelming and sinking every ship which they touched. The Persians suffered a complete and dreadful defeat. Artemisia, with her galleys, kept the sea, and fought to the last with manly courage; while Xerxes, who had beheld the engagement from an eminence on the shore, no sooner saw its issue, than he precipitately fled, upon the circulation of a false report that the Greeks designed to break down his bridge of boats upon the Hellespont. The Greeks, landing from their ships, attacked the rear of the Persian army, and made a dreadful carnage, so that the coast was thickly strewn with the dead bodies.*

* Herod. l. viii. c. 84, et seq. Plutarch, Aristid. Diod. Sic. l. xi. c. 19. It

By the orders of their sovereign, the scattered remains of the Persian fleet sailed directly for the Hellespont, while the army, by rapid marches, took the same route by Bœotia and Thessaly; making their passage by universal devastation: for this immense host, after consuming the natural produce of the country, were reduced, as Herodotus informs us, to eat the grass of the fields, and to strip the trees of their bark and leaves. The same writer mentions, that Xerxes himself never took off his clothes to go to rest, till he reached Alotus, in Thrace. Having provided, however, for his personal safety, he saved, as he imagined, his honour, in this ruinous enterprise, by carrying to Persia a few statues and rich plunder from Athens, and leaving 300,000 men under Mardonius to accomplish the conquest of Greece in the next campaign.

The victory of Salamis, the first great naval engagement of the Greeks, convinced them of the importance of a fleet for the national defence; and from that time their marine, particularly that of Athens, became an object of serious attention.

Mardonius, notwithstanding his immense force, seemed to have greater hopes from the power of Persian gold than Persian valor. He attempted to corrupt the Athenians by offering them the command of all Greece, if they would desert the confederacy of the united states. Aristides was then archon: he answered, that while the sun held its course in the firmament, the Persians had nothing to expect from the Athenians but mortal and eternal enmity. So much did he here speak the sense of his countrymen, that a single citizen having moved in the public assembly that the Persian deputies should be allowed to explain their proposals, was instantly stoned to death.

Mardonius, now determined to wreak his vengeance on Athens, prepared to assault the city with the whole of his force. The women, the aged, and the infants retired, a second time, to the neighbouring islands; and the Persians, without resistance, burnt and levelled the city with the ground. But the Athenians soon had an ample revenge.

The Spartans sent to their aid, and for the national defence, 5,000 citizens, each attended by seven Helots; in all, 40,000 men. The Tegeans, and others of the confederate states, contributed according to their powers; and the united army amounted, according to the best accounts, to 65,000, when they met the Persians under Mardonius, in the field of Platæa. This day's

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is singular that the most minute and accurate account of this celebrated sea-fight is to be found in the tragedy of the *Persæ*, by Æschylus, a composition equally valuable as a noble effort of poetic genius, and as an historical record. As Æschylus was himself present in this engagement, and thousands of his readers were eye-witnesses of the facts, his accuracy is beyond all impeachment.

conflict was a counterpart to the naval victory of Salamis. The Persians were totally defeated: Mardonius was killed in the fight. The carnage was incredible, as out of an army of 300,000 men, only 40,000 are said to have saved themselves by flight. The Persian camp, exhibiting all the wealth and appliances of luxury, was a rich and welcome plunder to the conquerors. To complete the triumph of the Greeks, their fleet, upon the same day, gained a victory over that of the Persians at Mycale.

From that day, the ambitious schemes of Xerxes were at an end. He had intended remaining at Sardis, in Lydia, to be nearer the scene of his operations in Greece. On receiving intelligence that all was lost, he evacuated his territory of all the temples of the Grecian divinities which he had burned the cities of Asia; and returning, to his capital of Susa, sought to drown in effeminate pleasures the remembrance of his shame; but his inglorious life was destined soon after to be ended by assassination.

At no time was the national character of the Greeks higher than at the period of which we now treat. A common interest had annihilated, for the time, the jealousies of the rival states, and given them union as a nation. At the Olympic games, all the people of Greece rose up to salute Themistocles. The only contention between the greater republics was a noble emulation of surpassing each other in patriotic exertions for the general defence of their country against the common foe. But this feeling seemed, in reality, to be an unnatural restraint against the predominant and customary spirit of these republics: for no sooner was the national danger, the sole motive of their union, at an end, than the former jealousies and divisions recommenced.

After the expulsion of the Persians, the Athenians now prepared with alacrity to rebuild their ruined city, and to strengthen it by additional fortifications. The people of Sparta could not regard with a tranquil mind: and they had even the folly to send a formal embassy to remonstrate against the measure: urging the weak pretence, that the natural interest required that there should be no fortified city out of Peloponnesus, lest the enemy, in the event of another invasion, should make it a place of strength. The real motive of this extraordinary remonstrance was abundantly apparent. They regarded the pain of rebuilding and enlarging Athens as an alarming symptom of their rival's ambition to establish a predominant power. They were aware that Athens, by means of her fleet, could annoy at pleasure, and thus keep in subjection, a great proportion of the inferior states. Their republic, so formidable on land, could never, with her iron money, have equipped a fleet to vie with that of Athens, far less to resist a foreign invasion such as they had lately experienced. Conscious of the superiority already obtained by Athens, Sparta beheld with uneasiness every symptom of her aggrandizement; she had no other means of retaining her

own consequence among the states of Greece, than the diminishing that of her rival.

It was not likely that the remonstrance from Sparta should deter the Athenians from the wise and patriotic purpose of rebuilding and strengthening their native city. They sent Themistocles to Sparta to explain the reasons which influenced them in that design, and proceeded in the meantime to carry it vigorously into execution: men, women, slaves, and even children, joined their efforts; and in a very short space of time, Athens rose from her ruins with a great accession of strength and splendor. The harbor of the Piræus, under the direction of Themistocles, then chief archon, was enlarged and fortified, so as to form the completest naval arsenal that yet belonged to any of the nations of antiquity.

The Persians still continued to maintain a formidable armament upon the sea, and the operations of the Greeks were now exerted to clear the Ægean and Mediterranean of their hostile squadrons. The united fleet of Greece was commanded by Aristides and Pausanias; the latter, a man of high birth and authority — uncle to one of the Spartan kings, and regent during his nephew's minority, but himself infamous for betraying his country. He had privately despatched letters to Xerxes, offering to facilitate to him the conquest of Greece; and demanding his daughter in marriage, as a reward of this signal service. Fortunately his letters were intercepted. The traitor fled for protection to the temple of Minerva, a sanctuary from which it was judged impossible to force him. His mother showed an example of virtue truly Lacedæmonian. She walked to the gate of the temple, and laying down a stone before the threshold, silently retired: the signal was understood and venerated; the Ephori gave immediate orders for building a wall around the temple, and within its precincts the traitor was starved to death.

Pausanias was succeeded in the command of the fleet by Cimon, the son of Miltiades, and pupil of Aristides. When the chief command of the war was given to Athens, a new system was established with regard to the contributions of the confederate states, trusting no longer to contingent and occasional supplies or free gifts. The subsidies to be levied from each were to be exacted in proportion to its means, and the revenue of its territory; and a common treasury was appointed to be kept in the Isle of Delos. The high character of Aristides was exemplified in the important and honorable trust with which he was invested by the common consent of the nation. It appears that not only the custody of the national supplies, but the power of fixing their proportions, was conferred on this illustrious man; nor was there ever a complaint or murmur heard against the equity with which this high but invidious function was administered. The best testimony of his virtue was the strict frugality of his life, and the honorable poverty in which he died. The public which defrayed his funeral

charges, and provided for the support of his children, thus decorated his name with the noblest memorial of uncorrupted integrity.

Themistocles was then at Argos. His credit at Athens had become formidable; an ostracism had been demanded, and he was banished by the influence of a faction of his enemies. He had fallen under the suspicion of participating in the treason of Pausanias; and circumstances, though not conclusive, afford some presumptions of his guilt. It is said that the papers of Pausanias, containing a detail of the proposed scheme for betraying Greece to Persia, were found in his possession. Certain it is that measures were taken for a public accusement before the council of the Amphictyons, when Themistocles, unwilling to risk the consequences of a trial while a strong party of the public were his enemies, hastily withdrew from Greece. He fled first for protection to Admetus, king of the Molossians: but the Greeks threatening a war against his protector, he thought it prudent to seek a more secure asylum, and betook himself to the court of Persia, where he was received with extraordinary marks of distinction and regard. It is said that the Persian monarch vented this keen sarcasm against the Athenians, that he regarded them as his best friends, in sending him the ablest man of their country; and that he sincerely wished they would persevere in the same policy of banishing from their territories all the good and wise. Themistocles was loaded with honors, but did not long survive to enjoy them. Remorse, it is affirmed, had taken possession of his mind, which all the magnificence and luxury of the East could not dispel or overpower; and he is said to have swallowed poison. The Greek historians, philosophers, and poets, all join in bearing honorable testimony to the splendid talents and the eminent services of Themistocles. Ambition, it is true, was his ruling passion; but the ambition of a truly noble mind seeks the glory and the greatness of its country, as essential to the fulfilment of its own desires; and if in reality the designs of Themistocles were criminal, which has never been fully proved, it is probable that the mean jealousies of his political enemies, and the ingratitude of his parent state, drove him reluctantly to measures at which his better nature revolted. His last request was that his bones should be carried to Greece, and buried in his native soil.

Xerxes, whom we have remarked to have died by assassination, was succeeded by his third son, Artaxerxes, surnamed *Longimanus*; who, in the absence of his eldest brother, having put to death the other, usurped the Persian throne. The war was still carried on with Greece. Cimon, the son of Miltiades, whose valor and abilities compensated to Athens and to Greece the loss of Themistocles, after expelling the Persians from Thrace and from many of their possessions in the lesser Asia, attacked and totally destroyed their fleet near the mouth of the river Eurymedon; and landing his troops, gained a signal victory over their army, on the same day.

The consequences of this victory were certainly important, if they produced a complete cessation of hostilities on the part of Persia against Greece, for a considerable length of time. It has, indeed, been asserted by some of the latest of the ancient writers, that a treaty of peace was now concluded, upon these honorable terms for Greece, that all the Greek cities of Asia should regain their independence, and that no Persian ship should dare to come in sight of the Grecian coast; but this important assertion rests upon no sufficient authority; and that the war was soon after renewed with great animosity, is a fact undisputed.

A dreadful earthquake happening at Lacedæmon, which demolished almost every dwelling in the city, and destroyed about 20,000 of the citizens, the Helots, taking advantage of the disorder from that calamity, rebelled, and joined themselves to the Messenians, with whom the state was then at war. Sparta, at this crisis, solicited aid from Athens: and, to the shame of that commonwealth, it was debated in the public assembly whether the request should be complied with. Ephialtes, the orator, urging that the two states were natural enemies, and that the prosperity of the one depended on the decrement of the other, gave his advice to abandon Sparta to her calamities. Cimon spoke and powerfully combated this unworthy sentiment, and his counsel prevailed. He was entrusted with the charge of the expedition to assist the Lacedæmonians; and he was successful in putting an end to the rebellion.

Cimon owed his consideration with his countrymen not only to the splendor of his military actions exalted by his great and glorious successes, but to the remembrance of his father's virtues and services, and above all, to a generosity of character which delighted equally in acts of private bounty and public munificence. Any of these distinguished merits were sufficient at Athens to sow the seeds of distrust and jealousy; but where all concurred, they furnished a certain and infallible preparative of the humiliation of their possessor. He had a rival too in the public favor, who sought his downfall as the means of his own elevation. This was Pericles, a young man of a noble family, of splendid powers, and great versatility of character; who knew how to veil his designs of ambition with the most consummate artifice. While he affected the utmost moderation, declining all public employments or offices, his conduct seemed to be actuated by no other motive than an amiable diffidence of his own powers, which, however, he took care to display whenever occasion offered, in animated and eloquent speeches which breathed the most ardent and virtuous patriotism. His mind was highly cultivated by the study of literature and the sciences; and the affability of his manners fascinated all with whom he conversed. It was not difficult for a man of this character to gain high popularity at Athens; and joining himself to the party which opposed the measures of Cimon, and seizing a

favorable opportunity when the popular mind was wound up to their purposes, that virtuous patriot fell a sacrifice, and was banished by the sentence of the ostracism.

The good understanding between Sparta and Athens could not be of long continuance. Their mutual jealousies broke out afresh, and soon terminated in an open war between the two republics; and most of the minor states of Greece took a part in the quarrel. Had they all [illegible] it had perhaps been their best policy to have stood aloof, and suffered those domineering states to harass and weaken each other. But their own smallness and insignificance were a bar to any plan of republican independence. The danger from the Persians the common enemy, was felt by all; and the smaller states had no chance to escape ruin, but through their allegiance to the greater.

In the course of this war between Athens and Sparta, Cimon, though in exile, eager to serve his country, came to the Athenian army with a hundred of his friends who had voluntarily gone with him to banishment. But the Athenians rejected his proffered service, and forced him to retire. His generous friends, forming themselves into a separate band, desperately precipitated themselves upon the army of the Lacedæmonians, and were all cut off. This incident has a powerful effect in dispelling the popular prejudices against this illustrious character. The people of Athens were now convinced that they had been unjust and cruel to one of their best patriots. Pericles was aware of this change of sentiment, and perceiving that his own pretensions might suffer by a fruitless opposition, took the merit to himself of being the first proposer of a public decree for Cimon's recall from banishment. Pericles knew likewise that his rival's talents and own sought a different field of exertion. While Cimon's ability as a general and naval commander would give him sufficient employment at a distance, he himself could rule the republic at home with uncontrolled authority.

Cimon accordingly returned to his country, after an exile of five years; before the end of which period Athens and Sparta had renewed their alliance; and he sailed at the head of an armament of 200 ships of war against the Persians, then in the vicinity of Cyprus, with a fleet of 300 sail. The squadron of the Greeks attacked and totally destroyed them. Cimon afterwards landed in Cilicia, and completed his triumph by a signal victory over Megabyzes, the Persian general, at the head of a great army. Cimon now undertook and completed the reduction of Cyprus; but while besieging its capital, and in the very moment of victory, this heroic man, wasted by disease and fatigue, died, to the general loss of Athens and of Greece. The army, at his special request when expiring, concealed his death, and proceeded with vigor in their operations till the object of the enterprise was gloriously accomplished, and Cyprus added to the dominion of Athens.

The naval and military power of Persia was completely broken by these repeated defeats; and all farther hostile operations against their formidable enemy were abandoned for a considerable length of time. The military glory of the Greeks seems at this period to have been at its highest elevation. They had maintained a long and successful war, and at length established an undisputed superiority over the greatest and most flourishing of the contemporary empires of antiquity. The causes of this superiority are sufficiently apparent. Greece undoubtedly owed many of her triumphs to those illustrious men who had the command of her fleets and armies; to Miltiades, to Aristides, to Themistocles, and to Cimon. But the noblest exertions of individuals would have availed little, without that spirit of union which bound together her separate states in defence of their common liberties. Greece was only formidable while united. The Persian empire infinitely superior in power, and inexhaustible in resources, derived from the force of a despotic involuntary and reluctant species of association, very different from an union arising from the spirit of patriotism. The armies of the Persians, immense in their numbers, were like the heavy and inanimate limbs of a vast and ill-organized body. They yielded a slavish obedience to the will of the head, but were totally incapable of any spirited and vigorous exertion.

But a season of rest from the annoyance of a foreign foe was ever fatal to the prosperity and to the real glory of the Greeks. Their bond of union was no longer in force. The petty jealousies and quarrels of the different states broke out afresh, with an acrimony increased from their temporary suspension.

Athens, which during the war had firmly attached to her alliance a great many of the smaller states, who, in return for protection, cheerfully contributed their supplies for carrying it on, was equally desirous of maintaining the same ascendant in a season of peace, and thus gradually sought to extinguish the original independence of the smaller states, and perpetuate their vassalage. But these were jealous of their freedom, and utterly scorned to become the slaves or tributaries of that ambitious republic. Unable, however, to withstand her power, they had no other means of withdrawing themselves from her dominion, than by courting an alliance with her rival Lacedæmon: for to show that they could at pleasure join themselves to either of these rival states, was, as they flattered themselves, a demonstration that they were not dependent on either. The smaller republics were therefore continually fluctuating between the scales of Athens and Lacedæmon; a circumstance which fomented the rivalship of the latter states, and imbittered their animosities; while it increased the national dissensions, and ultimately induced that general weakness which paved the way for the reduction and slavery of Greece.

From this period, too, the martial and the patriotic spirit began

alike to decline in the Athenian republic. An acquaintance with Asia, and the importation of a part of her wealth, had introduced an imitation of her manners, and a taste for her luxuries. But the Athenian luxury was widely different from that of the Persians. With the latter it was only ostentatious splendor and gross sensuality; with the former it took its direction from taste and genius: and while it incessibly corrupted the severe virtues, it is not to be denied that it led to the most elegant and refined enjoyments of life. The age of Pericles was the era of a change in the national spirit of the Athenians: a taste for the *fine arts*, which had hitherto been dormant from the circumstances of the national danger engrossing all the feelings and passions of men, began, now that this danger had ceased, to break forth with surprising lustre. The sciences, which are strictly allied to the arts, and which always find their chief encouragement from ease and luxury, rose at the same time to a great pitch of eminence.

The age of Pericles is not the era of the highest national glory of the Greeks, if we understand the term in its best and proudest signification: but it is at least the era of their highest internal splendor. Under this striking change, which is evidently preparatory to their downfall, we shall proceed to consider them.

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the Spartans, all other nations appeared but children in the art of war.—*Xenoph. de Rep. Lac.; Gillies's Hist. of Greece*, c.

## CHAPTER II.

Administration of Pericles—Peloponnesian War—Siege of Platæa—Alcibiades—Lysander—The Thirty Tyrants—Thrasybulus—Death of Socrates—Retreat of the Ten Thousand—War with Persia terminated by the Peace of Antalcidas.

The death of Cimon left Pericles for some time an unrivalled ascendency in the republic of Athens; but as the more his power increased, he used the less art to disguise his ambitious spirit, a faction was gradually formed to oppose him, at the head of which was Thucydides, the brother-in-law of Cimon, a man no less eminent for his wisdom and abilities than estimable for his integrity. He had powerful talents as an orator, which he nobly exerted in the cause of virtue and the true interest of his country; but he was deficient in those arts of address in which his rival Pericles so eminently excelled. While Pericles amused the people with shows, or gratified them with festivals, and while he dissipated the

public treasure in adorning the city with magnificent buildings, and the finest productions of the arts, it was in vain that Thucydides, ardent in the cause of virtue, presented to their minds the picture of ancient frugality and simplicity, or urged the weakening of the power and resources of the state by this prodigal expenditure of her treasure. Pericles flattered the vanity of his countrymen by representing their power as irresistible, and their resources as inexhaustible. It is probable that he was himself blinded by his ambition and vanity. He published an edict, requiring all the states of Greece to send against a certain day their deputies to Athens, to deliberate on the common interest of the nation. The Athenians looked on themselves as the masters of all Greece; but they had the mortification to find that no attention was paid to their presumptuous mandate. Pericles, to palliate this wound to their vanity, from which his own credit was in some danger of suffering, ordered the whole fleet of the republic to be immediately equipped, and hastened to make an ostentatious parade through the neighboring seas, by way of ostenting the power and naval superiority of the Athenians. This, however, was a wise policy, and shows that Pericles knew human nature, as well as the peculiar character of the people whom he ruled. It was necessary to keep the Athenians constantly employed, either with their amusements or some active enterprise; and in dexterously furnishing this alternate occupation by the art of his government of a people which surpassed any other in fickleness of character.

Fostered in their favorite passions, the Athenians grew every day more vain and presumptuous. They planned the most absurd schemes of conquest; no less than the reduction of Egypt, of Sicily, of that part of Italy called *Magna Græcia*—and the subjection of all their own colonies to an absolute dependence on the mother state. Pericles now perceived that he had gone too far, and that, in flattering their vanity, he had given rise to schemes which must terminate in national disgrace and in his own ruin. It was fortunate, both for him and for his country, that a seasonable rupture with Sparta gave a check to these romantic projects; and the sagacious demagogue, from that time, discovered that to cherish the luxurious spirit of his countrymen was a safer means of maintaining his power than to rouse their vanity and ambition. The finances, however, of the republic were exhausted, and the taxes of course increased. The party of Thucydides complained of this in loud terms, and with great justice. But Pericles had the address to ward off this blow, by proudly offering to defray from his own fortune the expense of those magnificent structures which he had reared for the public. This was touching the right cord; for neither the generosity nor the vanity of the Athenians would allow this offer to be accepted; and the result was a great increase of popularity to Pericles, and the complete humiliation of the party of his enemies. He now signalized his triumph by

procuring the banishment of Thucydides: and on the pretence of establishing a few new customs, he dexterously got rid of the most turbulent of the citizens who traversed and opposed his government.

The allies of the commonwealth, however, loudly complained that the public treasures, to which they had largely contributed, and which were intended for their common defence and security against the barbarous nations, were entirely dissipated, in gratifying the Athenian populace with feasts and shows, or in decorating their city with ornamental buildings. Pericles tauntingly answered, that the republic was not accountable to them for the employment of their money, which was costing more than the price they paid for the protection which they received. The allies might have replied with justice, that in contributing supplies, they did not discharge a debt or make a purchase, but deposited a fund, to be faithfully employed for their advantage, and of the expenditure of which they were entitled to demand a strict account: but they durst not call Athens to account; and Pericles and Athens were of one opinion.

But an event soon took place, which silenced all inquiries of this nature, and bound the subordinate and confederate states in humble submission to the principal,—this was the war of Peloponnesus.

The state of Corinth had been included in the last treaty between Athens and Lacedæmon. The Corinthians had for some time been at war with the people of Corcyra, when both these states solicited the aid of the Athenians. This republic, after some deliberation, was persuaded by Pericles to take part with Corcyra; a measure which the Corinthians with great justice complained of, not only as an infraction of the treaty with Sparta, but on the ground that Corcyra was their own colony; and it was a settled point in the general politics of Greece, that a foreign power should never interfere in the disputes between a parent state and its colony. A less important cause was sufficient to exasperate the Lacedæmonians against their ancient rival, and war was solemnly proclaimed between the two republics.

The detail of this war, which has been admirably written by Thucydides, one of the best historians as well as one of the greatest generals of antiquity, though it concerned only the states of Greece, becomes, by the pen of that illustrious writer, one of the most interesting subjects which history has recorded. Our plan excluding all minute details, as violating the due proportions in the comprehensive picture of ancient history, necessarily confines us to a delineation of outlines.

The greater part of the continental states of Greece declared for Sparta. The Isles, dreading the naval power of Athens, took part with that republic. Thus the principal strength of Sparta was on land, and that of Athens at sea; whence it may be judged,

that the opposing states might long annoy each other, before any approach to a decisive engagement.

The army of the Lacedæmonians, which amounted to above 60,000 men, was more than double that of the Athenians and their allies. But this inequality was balanced by the great superiority of the marine of Athens. Their plan of military operations was, therefore, quite different. The Athenian fleet ravaged the coasts of Peloponnesus; while the army of the Lacedæmonians desolated the territory of Attica and its allied states, and proceeded with little resistance almost to the gates of Athens. The Athenians, feeling the disgrace of being thus braved upon their own territory, insisted, with great importunity, that Pericles should allow them to face the enemy in the field: but he followed a wiser plan of operation. He bent his whole endeavor to fortify the city, while he kept the Lacedæmonians constantly at bay by skirmishing parties of horse; and, in the meantime, the Athenian fleet of 100 sail was desolating the enemies' coasts, and plundering and ravaging the Spartan territory. The consequence was, the Spartans, abandoning all hope, which they had at first conceived, of taking Athens by siege, ended the campaign by retreating into Peloponnesus. The Athenians, in honor of their countrymen who had fallen in battle, celebrated magnificent funeral games, and Pericles pronounced an animated encomium to their memory, which is given at large by Thucydides.

In the next campaign, the Lacedæmonians renewed the invasion of Attica; and the invaded had to cope at once with all the horrors of war and pestilence; for Athens was at this time visited by one of the most dreadful plagues recorded in history. The particulars of this calamity are painted in strong and terrible colors by Thucydides, who speaks from his own experience, as he was among those who were afflicted, and survived the contagion. One extraordinary effect he mentions, which we know, likewise, to have happened in other times and places from the same cause. The general despair produced the grossest profligacy and licentiousness of manners. It seems to be common, too, to all democratic governments, that every public calamity is charged to the account of their rulers. Pericles was blamed as the occasion, not only of the war, but of the pestilence; for the great numbers cooped up in the city were supposed to have corrupted the air. The Athenians, losing all resolution to struggle with their misfortunes, sent ambassadors to Sparta to sue for peace; but this humiliating measure served only to increase the arrogance of their enemies, who refused all accommodation, unless upon terms utterly disgraceful to the suppliant state. Although Pericles had strongly dissuaded his countrymen from what he thought a mean and pusillanimous measure, they scrupled not to make him the victim of its failure, and with equal injustice and ingratitude, they deprived him of all command, and inflicted on him a heavy fine.

But they found no change for the better from his removal. Those factions which he had restrained still in managing and controlling, began to excite fresh disorders; and the very men who had solicited and procured his disgrace, were now the most eager to restore him to his former power. Such was the fickleness of the Athenian character; so fluctuating are the minds and the counsels of a mob—and so insignificant their censure and applause.

This extraordinary man did not long survive the recovery of his honors and ascendency. On his death-bed he is said to have drawn comfort from the soothing reflection, that he had never made one of his countrymen wear mourning; a glorious object of exultation for the man who had run a career of the most exalted ambition, who had sustained the character of the chief of his country, and in that capacity had at his command the lives and fortunes of all his fellow citizens. The eulogists of republican moderation and frugality have reproached Pericles with his ambition, his vanity, and his taste for the elegant arts subservient to luxury and corruption of manners: and those features of his mind, without doubt, had a sensible influence on the character of his country; but his integrity, his generosity of heart, the wisdom of his counsels, and the pure spirit of patriotism which dictated all his public measures, have deservedly ranked him among the greatest men of antiquity.

The celebrated Aspasia, first the mistress and afterwards the wife of Pericles, had from her extraordinary talents a great ascendency over his mind, and was supposed frequently to have dictated his counsels in the most important concerns of the state. She was believed to have formed a society of courtesans, whose influence over their gallants, young men of consideration in the republic, she thus rendered subservient to the political views of Pericles. The adversaries of his measures employed the comic poets, Eupolis, Cratinus, and others, to expose those political intrigues to public ridicule on the stage; but Pericles maintained his ascendency, and Aspasia her influence; for such were the powers of her mind, and the fascinating charms of her conversation, that even before her marriage and while exercising the trade of a courtesan, her house was the frequent resort of the gravest and most respectable of the Athenian citizens; among the rest, of the virtuous Socrates.

The age of Pericles is the era of the greatness, the splendor, and the luxury of Athens, and consequently the period from which we may date her decline. The power of Athens was not built on any solid basis. She was rich only from the contributions of her numerous allies; and when these withdrew their subsidies and shook off their dependence, which they were ever ready to do when they were not in danger, her power declined of course: for the territory of the republic was small and unproductive, and her internal resources extremely limited. Had Sparta adhered to the spirit of her constitution, she was much more independent than

Athens. Her situation naturally gave her the command of Peloponnesus. She could employ the subsidies of her allies to no other purposes than those for which they were destined; and therefore required no more than what the expenses of war necessarily demanded. Her confederate states, therefore, paid an easy price for protection, and consequently found it always their best interest to adhere to their allegiance. With these advantages, the balance was much in favor of Sparta, in her contest with Athens. But one false step threw the weight into the opposite scale.

The Spartans, eager to cope with the Athenians at sea as well as on land, solicited the aid of Persia to furnish them with a fleet. This measure, which opened Greece a second time to the barbarians, annihilated the patriotic reputation of Lacedæmon, and detached many of the states from her allegiance, through the just dread of subjection to a foreign power.

It is sufficient to give a general idea of the conduct of the Peloponnesian war; its detail must be sought in Thucydides and Xenophon. Thucydides lived only to complete the history of the first twenty-one years of the Peloponnesian war; the transactions of the remaining six years were detailed by Xenophon, in his Grecian History. Neither party seem to have pursued any fixed or uniform plan of operations. The theatre of war was continually shifting from one quarter of Greece to another, as occasional successes seemed to direct; but ignorant how to push advantages, and equally dispirited with trifling losses, the rival states were always alternately disposed to peace, or a renewal of hostilities.

One of the most remarkable transactions of this war was the gallant defence made by the little town of Platæa, which sustained a siege and blockade for near two years, against the power of the combined states of Peloponnesus. As this is the first regular siege of which history gives us any complete detail, a short narrative of its particulars, as described by Thucydides, will be useful, as illustrating the state of the military art at that period, in so far as regards the attack and defence of fortified places.

Platæa, in the Bœotian district of Greece, and not far distant from Thebes, being frequently harassed by that republic, had allied herself to Athens as her surest defence against servitude and oppression. This alliance brought on her the hostility of the Peloponnesian confederacy: but remembering the signal services of this small state at the time of the Persian invasion, the Spartans proposed to compromise matters with Platæa, provided she renounced her treaty of union with Athens, and put herself under the protection of Lacedæmon. The Athenians, in the meantime, sent the Platæans an assurance of all their support, and this determined Platæa to keep firm to her ancient friends. The Spartans, thinking they had now fulfilled every obligation of honor, laid vigorous siege to the town, which contained only a miserable garrison of 400 citizens, 80 Athenians, and 110 women, besides children.

The city was surrounded with a wall and ditch, around which the besiegers first planted a strong circle of wooden palisades. Then filling up a part of the ditch to serve as a bridge, they proceeded to raise a mound of earth against the wall, when they strengthened on the outside with piles closely wattled with branches, to give stability to the mound which was to serve as a stage for the engines of attack. Meantime, the besieged, foreseeing that the enemy would soon be in possession of this part of the wall, while they took every means to annoy the assailants and impede their work by repeatedly undermining the mound, built a new wall in the inside, in the form of a crescent, so that, should the outer wall be gained, the enemy might still find an unforeseen impediment to their approach. The besiegers made small progress, and were daily losing great numbers of men; they therefore tried a new plan, which was, by heaping great quantities of wood covered with pitch and sulphur around the walls, to set fire to the city in different quarters at once. The experiment promised success, for there was an immense conflagration; but fortunately for the besieged, a torrent of rain extinguished the fire. On the failure of this attempt, the besiegers determined to turn the siege into a blockade: and they now built two strong walls of brick around the town, which they strengthened on either side with a ditch and towers at small intervals; and as the winter was at hand, the Bœotians were left to guard the walls and prevent all succors from without, while the Spartans and the rest of the allies returned to Peloponnesus. The situation of the Plataans was now extremely hopeless; their stores were exhausted, and no resource remained but to force a passage through the enemy's works. This one half of the garrison attempted and executed in a very daring manner. They took advantage of a dark and stormy night, and mounting the enemy's lines not by ladders, they surprised and cut to pieces the guards in the towers, and were descending the outer wall, when the alarm was given, and the Bœotians were in a moment all in arms; 500 of these with flaming torches, rushing to the place, served only to give more advantage to the Plataans, by showing them where to direct their darts and stones while they passed by them in the dark. In a word, they made good their escape to Athens; while the remaining part of the garrison next day surrendered at discretion, and were barbarously massacred by the exasperated Lacedæmonians. The whole operations of this siege indicate the very imperfect state to which the art of war had attained at that time, in the most warlike of the nations of antiquity.

A truce was now concluded between the belligerent powers for fifty years; but this was observed only for a few months. Alcibiades, who, after the death of Pericles, had obtained a high ascendant with the Athenian people, which he owed not less to his noble birth and great riches than to his insinuating manners

and powers of eloquence, at this time directed all the counsels of the republic. His ambition and his vanity were equal to those of his predecessor, but his measures were not always the result of equal prudence. It seemed to be ambition, and the desire of opposing his rival Nicias, that were the sole motives of his conduct in promoting a quarrel between the people of Argos and Lacedæmon, which engaged the Athenians in support of the Argives to renew the Peloponnesian war. The Argives, however, had more prudence than their new allies, and made a peace for themselves. Disappointed in this project, Alcibiades now turned his views to the conquest of Sicily — a more splendid object of ambition; but equally unsuccessful, and much more disastrous in its consequences. The plan of conquering Sicily had been among those wild projects cherished by the Athenians, but from which they had been dissuaded by the prudence of Pericles: it was now resumed on the frivolous ground that the Egestans and Leontines, two Sicilian states, had requested the Athenians to protect them against the oppression of Syracuse. Nicias attempted to convince his countrymen of the folly of embroiling themselves in this quarrel, which was a sufficient motive with Alcibiades to encourage it. The expedition was therefore undertaken, and committed to four generals, Nicias, Lamachus, Demosthenes, and Alcibiades; but the latter had scarcely landed in Sicily, when he was called back to Athens to defend himself against a charge of treason and impiety. As every thing there was carried by a faction, Alcibiades was condemned, and escaped a capital punishment only by taking refuge at Sparta, and offering his warmest services to the enemies of his country. Meantime the dissensions of the Athenian generals, the time wasted in besieging some small sea-ports, and the arrival of succors from Lacedæmon, which strengthened and inspirited the Syracusans, combined to the total failure of the enterprise. After a fruitless attempt upon Syracuse, in the course of which Lamachus was killed, and after various engagements both by sea and land, in which the invading fleet and army were always obliged to act upon the defensive, the Athenians were totally defeated. They now attempted a retreat, but being closely pursued they were forced at length to surrender prisoners of war, leaving their fleet in the hands of the enemy, and stipulating only that their lives should be spared. This condition the Syracusans fulfilled as to the army, but, with a refinement of barbarism, they scourged to death the two generals, Nicias and Demosthenes. Such was the miserable issue of this ill-concerted expedition.

The consequences of these disasters were, on the whole, not without some benefit to the Athenians. Their foolish pride was humbled, their inconsiderate ambition checked, and some wise and vigorous reforms were made in the constitution of the republic. Among these was the institution of a new council of elders, whose function was to digest and prepare the resolutions touching all

public measures, before they were proposed in the public assembly. This, as a judicious writer has remarked, "was providing for the prudence of executive government, but not for vigor, for secrecy, and for despatch." Unfortunately in these capital points is inseparable from a constitution purely democratical.

We have remarked that Alcibiades had taken refuge at Lacedæmon. Here he soon attained both confidence and high employment; but his progress in favor, which the traitor ill-deserved, was of short duration. The principal men among the Lacedæmonians could ill brook these marks of favor and preference to a stranger and a refugee. His character was known as that of a thorough-paced politician; his motives were therefore always suspected; and while ostensibly employed in the service of Sparta with the Greek states of Asia—a service which had no other end than his own private interest—a party at Lacedæmon had procured his condemnation for treason against the state. He got a reasonable intimation of his danger, and betook himself for protection to Tissaphernes, the Persian governor of Sardis.

In the eighth year of the Peloponnesian war, the Persian monarch, Artaxerxes Longimanus, died. He was succeeded by Xerxes the Second, his only legitimate son, who was soon after assassinated by his natural brother Sogdianus. This prince was dethroned a few months after, by his brother Ochus, who assumed the name of Darius, to whom the Greeks added the surname of Nothus, or the Bastard. He was a weak prince, controlled entirely by his queen Parysatis, a woman of great artifice and ambition. His reign was a continued series of rebellion and disturbance.

The versatile character of Alcibiades could accommodate itself to all situations. At Athens he had alternately flattered the nobility and the populace. At Sparta he assumed, with admirable hypocrisy, the simple and austere manners of a Lacedæmonian. At Sardis, the easy companion of the luxury and debauchery of Tissaphernes, he gained over that satrap the most entire ascendency. This situation he attempted to turn to his advantage, by making his peace with his countrymen of Athens. He offered them the alliance of Tissaphernes, and of consequence the superiority over Sparta, and a termination of the ruinous war of Peloponnesus; but he made the absolute conditions of these advantages his own recall, and a change of the Athenian constitution from a popular government to an oligarchy of the principal citizens. The spirit of Athens was broken; patriotic virtue was at low ebb; and a continuance of war, and of the triumphs of her rival state, offered a prospect of nothing but ruin. The terms of Alcibiades were complied with. The government of the republic was committed to four hundred of the nobles, who were vested with absolute authority.

No sooner was intelligence of this sudden and extraordinary revolution brought to the Athenian army at Samos, than they

followed a conduct equally extraordinary. They deposed from command those generals whom they suspected of favoring the revolution; they sent deputies into Asia, to court aid from the very man who was the author; they solicited him to return to take the chief command, and rescue their country from its new tyrants. Surprised and delighted with this most unexpected issue to his schemes, Alcibiades secretly embraced the offer. He would not, however, return till he had obtained his pardon by some important services. The Lacedæmonian fleet under Mindarus had seized the island of Eubœa, a most essential dependency upon Athens. Alcibiades defeated Mindarus in two naval engagements, and recovered that important island. The people of Athens, exasperated at their own governors, to whose weakness and contentions they attributed the loss of Eubœa, began to look towards the man who had recovered it as the prop and stay of his country. He had increased his triumphs by the capture of Byzantium, Chalcedon, and Selymbria, which had revolted from the Athenian government; and when he appeared with his ships of war in the port of Piræus, all Athens rushed forth to hail his arrival, and to crown him with garlands of victory. The government of the four hundred nobles was now abolished, the ancient constitution renewed, and Alcibiades declared chief general of the republic by sea and land.

For twenty-eight years the Peloponnesian war was carried on with various success. The military talents of Alcibiades were displayed in several important victories. While successful, he was the idol of his country. But in all democracies, and democratic governments, the popularity of those in power must keep pace with the success of the public measures. A single battle lost in Asia deprived Alcibiades of all his power, and he became a second time an exile from his country. But it would appear that his absence was always fatal to the Athenians. The fleet of the republic at Ægos-Potamos, through the carelessness of its commanders, was entirely destroyed by Lysander, the admiral of the Lacedæmonians. Of three hundred ships which had sailed from the Piræus, only eight returned to the coast of Attica.

Athens, besieged by sea and land, was now at the last extremity. Her fleet, which was the main defence of the republic, was annihilated. After sustaining a blockade of six months, the Athenians offered to submit, on the condition that their city and the harbor of Piræus should be saved from destruction. The Spartans and allied states took this proposal into consideration. The allies strenuously urged the total destruction of the Athenian empire and name. But the Spartans were more generous. They concluded a peace on the following conditions,—that the fortifications of Piræus should be demolished; that Athens should limit the number of her fleet to twelve ships; that she should give up all the towns taken during the war; and, for the future, undertake no

military enterprise but under the command of the Lacedæmonians. Such was the issue of the famous war of Peloponnesus.

It is to this same Lysander who had the merit of terminating this destructive war so gloriously for his country, that all the ancient writers have attributed the first attack upon the system of Lycurgus, and the beginning of the corruption of the Spartan constitution. Gold was now for the first time introduced into Lacedæmon. Lysander sent home an immense mass of plunder which had been taken in Greece and Asia during the war of Peloponnesus. This was a direct breach of the fundamental laws of the state; but the period was now come, when such a measure was not only justifiable, but necessary. The truth is, that the institutions of Lycurgus were fitted for a rude period of society, and adapted to the regulations of a small, a warlike, and an independent commonwealth. His system was quite repugnant to the spirit of conquest, and the manners that are inseparable from extensive dominion. When Lacedæmon came to aspire to the sovereignty of Greece, it was impossible for her to retain her ancient manners, or adhere to her ancient laws. To preserve the ascendency she had acquired in Greece, it was necessary either that she should herself accumulate treasures requisite to pay her dependants in the allied commonwealths, and grant them occasional subsidies, or to be herself dependent for these resources upon the Persian satrapy. Lysander saw the necessity, and he took that alternative which appeared to him the least inadmissible. He procured the abrogation of that ancient law which prohibited the importation of gold into the republic. It was not allowed a free circulation, but was deposited in the public treasury, to be employed solely for the uses of the state. It was declared a capital crime if any should be found in the possession of a private citizen. Plutarch censures this as a weak and sophistical distinction. It was indeed easy to see, that whenever it became necessary for the state to be rich, it would soon become the interest and the passion of individuals to be so. This consequence immediately followed: and though some severe examples were made of offenders against the law, it was found impossible, from this period, to enforce its observance.

The reduction of Athens by the Spartans occasioned an entire change in the constitution of the Athenian republic. Lysander abolished the democracy, and substituted in its place an administration of thirty governors, or, as the Greek historians term them, *Tyrants*, (*Τύραννοι*,) whose power seems to have been absolute, unless in so far as each was restrained by the equally arbitrary will of his colleagues. He likewise placed a Spartan garison in the citadel, under the command of Callibius. Soon after this event, so disgraceful to his country, the celebrated Alcibiades was put to death, in Phrygia, by assassins employed for that purpose by Pharnabazus, the Persian governor, who, it is said, was prompted to that act of treachery by the Lacedæmonians, who dreaded to see

this able and ambitious man once more reconciled to his country. He perished in the fortieth year of his age.

The administration of *the thirty tyrants* soon became quite intolerable to the Athenians. A stronger specimen of their government cannot be given than the following. Theramenes, one of the thirty, a man of a more humane disposition than his colleagues, having opposed the severity of some of their measures, Critias, his colleague, who by the controlling influence of the Spartans had acquired the chief ascendency in the council, accused him of disturbing the peace of the state. The consequence was, that after a public trial, in which the philosopher Socrates was among the few who had courage to aid him in his defence, he was condemned to die by poison: and his death was the prelude to a series of proscriptions, confiscations, and murders of the most respectable of the citizens, who were obnoxious to these sanguinary rulers, or who had dared to murmur at their proceedings. It is computed by Xenophon, though doubtless with exaggeration, that a greater number of Athenian citizens lost their lives by the sentence of these tyrants, in the short space of eight months, than had fallen in the whole course of the Peloponnesian war.

The people were awed into silence, and dumb with consternation. The most eminent of the Athenian families left their country in despair; and the bravest of those who cherished a hope of restoring its liberties and putting an end to this usurpation, chose for their leader Thrasybulus, a man of known abilities and undaunted resolution, under whose conduct and auspices they resolved to make a vigorous effort for the recovery of their freedom. Sparta had strictly prohibited the other states of Greece receiving, protecting, or giving any aid to the Athenian fugitives. Thebes and Megara were the only republics which generously dared to disobey this presumptuous mandate. Lysias, an orator of Syracuse, sent to their aid five hundred soldiers, raised at his own expense. This band of patriots had now increased to a considerable number, and, headed by Thrasybulus, they made a sudden assault on the Piræus, and made themselves masters of the port and fortifications, which were the main defence of the city of Athens. The thirty tyrants hastily assembled their troops to attack and dislodge the assailants, and a battle ensued, in which the patriots were victorious. Critias was killed; and as the troops of the tyrants were making a disorderly retreat, Thrasybulus gallantly addressed them as friends and fellow citizens. "Why do you fly from me," said he, "as from an enemy? Am I not your countryman and your best friend? It is not against you, but against your oppressors, that I am fighting. Let us cordially unite in the noble design of vindicating the liberty of our dear country." This appeal had its proper effect. The army returned to Athens, and, in a full assembly of the people, the thirty tyrants were deposed and expelled from the city. The government was

committed to a council of ten citizens, who still abused their power. The deposed thirty solicited the aid of Sparta, and an army immediately took the field, with the purpose of re-establishing them in their power: but the attempt was unsuccessful: the patriots were again victorious; the oppressors of their country were defeated and slain, and Thrasybulus returning in triumph to Athens, after proclaiming a general amnesty, by which every citizen took a solemn oath to bury all past transactions in oblivion, this brave and virtuous Athenian had the signal honor of restoring to his country its ancient form of government.

One event which happened at this time reflected more disgrace upon the Athenians than all their intestine dissensions or their national humiliation. This was the persecution and death of the illustrious Socrates: he who, in the words of Cicero, "first brought philosophy from heaven to dwell upon earth, who familiarized her to the acquaintance of man, who applied her divine doctrines to the corrective purposes of life, and the advancement of human happiness, and the true discernment of good and evil." This great man, who was the bright pattern of every virtue which he taught, became an object of hatred and disgust to the corrupted Athenians. He had excited the jealousy of the Sophists, a set of men who pretended to universal science, whose character stood high with the Athenian youth, and who taught their disciples a specious mode of arguing with equal plausibility on all subjects, and on either side of any question. Socrates detested this species of jugglery, which mined the foundation of every moral truth. He saw its pernicious influence, and he was at pains to expose the futility of this trifling logic, and to bring its professors into merited contempt. These, therefore, and a numerous party of their disciples, became, of course, his inveterate enemies. They calumniated Socrates as a corrupter of youth; for of these the most ingenuous and virtuous were openly become his scholars and partisans: they accused him as an enemy to religion, because in his sublime reasonings, without regard to the superstitions of the vulgar, he endeavored to lead the mind to the knowledge of one supreme and beneficent Being, the author of nature, and the supporter of the universe: they represented him, in fine, as a foe to the constitution of his country, because he had never been restrained by an interested or selfish policy, from freely blaming that inconstancy and fluctuation of counsels which mark the proceedings of all popular assemblies. There was abundant matter of accusation, and a charge of treason and impiety was laid against him in full form.

The ablest, at that time, of the Greek orators, Lysias, generously offered to undertake the defence of Socrates; but the latter declined to avail himself of that offer. "I will not," said he, "suppose my judges interested in my condemnation; and if I am guilty, I must not endeavor by persuasion to avert the award

of justice." His defence he made himself, with the manly fortitude of conscious innocence. Plato, in his *Apologia Socratis*, has given an ample account of it. It consisted of a simple detail of his life and conduct as a public teacher; in reference to which he uttered this striking apostrophe: "I believe, O Athenians, the existence of God more than my accusers. I am so perfectly convinced of that great truth, that to God, and to you, I submit to be judged in that manner you shall think best for me and for yourselves." The judges, whom their demagogues had strongly prejudiced against this great and good man, were affected by his defence, and showed marks of a favorable disposition; when Anytus and several others, men of high consideration in the republic, now openly stood forth and joined the party of his accusers. The weak and inconstant rabble were drawn along by their influence, and a majority of thirty suffrages declared Socrates guilty. The punishment was still undetermined, and he himself had the right of choosing it. "It is my choice," said he, "that since my past life has been employed in the service of the public, that public should for the future be at the charge of my support." This tranquillity of mind, which could sport with the danger of his situation, served only to exasperate his judges. He was sentenced, after an imprisonment of thirty days, to drink the juice of hemlock. That time he spent as became the hero and the philosopher. His friends had prepared the means of his escape, and earnestly endeavored to persuade him to attempt it; but he convinced them that it is a crime to violate the law, even where its sentence is unjust. On the day of his death he discoursed with uncommon force of eloquence on the immortality of the soul, on the influence that persuasion ought to have on the conduct of life, and on the comfort it diffused on the last moments of existence. He drank the poisoned cup without the smallest emotion; and, in the agony of death, showed to his attending friends an example of tranquillity which their deep-felt grief denied them all power of imitating. The narrative of this concluding scene, as it is given by Plato in his dialogue entitled Phædon, is one of the noblest specimens of simple, eloquent, and pathetic description which is any where to be met with; a narrative, to the force of which Cicero bears this strong testimony, that he never could read it without tears. Such was the end of this true philosopher, of whom his ungrateful countrymen knew not the value till they had destroyed him. It was time now to awake to shame and to remorse, and to express their sorrow for his death by the utmost abhorrence for his persecutors. Those met with their deserved punishment; but the reproach was indelibly fixed upon the character of the Athenians, and no contrition could wipe it out.

The military character of the Greeks was not yet extinguished, notwithstanding their national corruption. In the same year with the last-mentioned event, a part of the Grecian troops in Asia

signalized themselves by one of the most remarkable exploits recorded in history: this was *the retreat of the ten thousand.*

On the death of Darius Nothus, his eldest son Artaxerxes Mnemon succeeded to the empire, while his brother Cyrus was by their father's will invested with the government of Lydia and several of the adjoining provinces. The ambition of this young man early conceived the criminal project of dethroning his elder brother, and seizing upon the throne of Persia; but though his design was detected, he obtained his pardon from Artaxerxes, upon the entreaties of Parysatis, the queen-mother, and with a singular measure of generosity was even continued in the full command of his provinces. This humane indulgence he treacherously abused, by secretly levying a large army in different quarters of the lesser Asia, under the feigned pretence of restraining some of the disorderly natives, but in reality with the purpose of a sudden attack against his unprepared and [illegible] brother. In the army of Cyrus were a chosen body of 13,000 Greeks from the Peloponnesus, under the command of Clearchus, a Lacedæmonian, an officer of great experience and prowess, to whom alone of all his captains Cyrus confided the nature and object of his enterprise. It was with infinite address upon the part of Clearchus, that the Greeks, together with the rest of the army, were led on from province to province till they came within a few days' march of Babylon, where Cyrus at length imparted to them the purpose of the expedition, and reconciled them to its hazards by a large increase of present pay and an assurance of unbounded rewards in the event of final success. But this they were not destined to experience. In a decisive engagement at Cunaxa, in the plain between the Tigris and Euphrates, the Greeks put to flight that wing of the Persian army which was opposed to them. Cyrus, after the most extraordinary exertions of personal valor, espying Artaxerxes amidst the strong body of his guards, singled him out for his attack, and after twice wounding his brother and dismounting him from his horse, fell himself a victim by the hand of Artaxerxes, who pierced him to the heart with his javelin. Thus this ambitious youth, who seems to have been in other respects an accomplished and heroic character, met with his deserved fate. It is surprising that Xenophon, who has admirably written the history of this expedition, should have bestowed the most unbounded encomium on this prince, without the smallest censure of his most culpable enterprise.

The Greek army, diminished by its losses and by desertions to 10,000 men, made a most amazing retreat. Harassed by the Persian troops under Tissaphernes, who hung continually upon their rear, Clearchus brought them again to a pitched battle, in which the Greeks defeated the barbarians a second time and put their army to flight. Perceiving, however, that in a country of enemies, where they must fight at every step of their progress,

they must perish, even though victorious in every action, Clearchus willingly listened to a proposed accommodation with Tissaphernes, who invited him for that purpose, together with the rest of the Greek commanders, to a friendly conference. With great weakness, Clearchus and four of the principal officers repaired to the enemy's camp, attended by a very scanty escort. They had no sooner entered the tent of Tissaphernes than, upon a given signal, they were all massacred. The consternation of the Greeks at this horrible treachery was extreme. They saw that they had nothing to trust either to the faith or mercy of the barbarians, and that their only safety lay at the point of their swords. In a midnight consultation of the troops, Xenophon, then a young man and in no high command, took upon him to counsel and to harangue the despairing army. By his advice they immediately chose new generals in the room of those who had perished, and Xenophon himself, with four others, being invested with this important charge, his admirable conduct, perseverance, and valor, brought his countrymen at length safely through all their difficulties. They began by burning all their useless baggage, every man retaining only what was absolutely necessary for the march. They proceeded with indefatigable resolution and almost daily conflicts with the enemy, ignorant of the roads and of the defiles, crossing wide and dangerous rivers, and often breast-deep in the snow, to make their way through the mountainous country eastward of Mesopotamia, to Armenia and the farther provinces bordering upon the Euxine. Ascending a steep mountain on the borders of Colchis, the vanguard of the army set up a prodigious shout, which Xenophon, in the rear, supposed to be the signal of a sudden attack from the enemy, and urged on the main body with haste to the summit; when, to their inexpressible joy, they found it was the first sight of the sea which had occasioned this exclamation. With one sudden and sympathetic emotion, the soldiers and commanders rushed into each other's arms and shed a torrent of tears; and then, without any order, each man striving to outdo his fellow, they raised an immense pile of stones upon the spot, which they crowned with broken bucklers and spoils they had taken from the enemy. Arriving soon after at Trapezus, a Greek colony upon the Euxine, they celebrated splendid games with great joy and festivity for the space of several days; and finally embarking at Sinope, after many turns of fortune and various adventures in the course of their progress homewards, this eventful expedition, in which the Grecian army traversed a space of 1155 leagues, was terminated in the course of fifteen months.

The narrative of this expedition by Xenophon is one of the most valuable compositions that remain to us of antiquity. In the form of a journal it gives a minute detail of every day's transactions, the counsels, plans, and different opinions of the principal officers, a vivid description of the places, cities, rivers, and mountains, upon

the line of march; the productions of the different countries; the singular manners of many of the rude nations through which they passed; and, finally, the extraordinary incidents which befell this hardy and resolute band of adventurers, through every stage of a campaign of greater duration, difficulty, and danger than was ever performed by any army of ancient or of modern times. In fine, the *Anabasis* of Xenophon, with the veracity of genuine history, has all the charms of an interesting romance.

The cities of Ionia had taken part with the younger Cyrus against Artaxerxes. The greater part of the Greeks in the service of Cyrus in that expedition were, as we have seen, Lacedæmonians. Sparta was now engaged to defend her countrymen, and consequently was involved in a war with Persia. There was an inherent weakness in the constitution of the Persian monarchy, arising from the high power and almost supreme authority exercised by the satraps, or governors of the provinces. It is easy to imagine how formidable to the monarch of Persia must have been the confederacy of two or three of these satraps, and of consequence that it was his chief interest to keep them disunited by fomenting mutual jealousies. The state maxim of the Persian kings was, therefore, to divide, in order to command; a rule of policy which is a certain proof of the fundamental weakness of that government where it is necessary to adopt it. In Persia, the satraps might, by this management, be kept in a state of unwilling dependence on the crown, but it left the monarchy itself weak and defenceless.

Had the Greeks at this period been sensible of their real interest; had they again united as a nation, making Sparta the head of the confederacy, as in the former war with that power they had done Athens, it would not have been a difficult enterprise to have overthrown this vast empire. But experience does not always enlighten: and with the Greeks it was not easy for a sense of general or national advantage to overcome particular jealousies. The haughty Athenians, in spite of their humiliation, would have ill brooked the degradation of ranging themselves under the banners of Sparta; much less was it to be expected that the Spartans, justly elevated with their success in the Peloponnesian war, would ever again stoop to act a subordinate part to Athens.

Conon, the Athenian, who, in the conclusion of that war had lost the decisive battle of *Ægos-Potamos*, had retired to the isle of Cyprus, where he only waited an opportunity of regaining his credit, and recommending himself to his country by some active service against her rival, Sparta. In this view, he threw himself under the protection of Artaxerxes, who gave him the command of a fleet which he had equipped in Phœnicia.

The Lacedæmonians, on receiving this intelligence, resolved to prosecute the war with the utmost vigor; and Agesilaus, one of the Spartan kings, in that view crossed into Asia with an army. He had, in his first campaign, such signal success, that the Persian

monarchy seemed to threaten a revolution. The Asiatic provinces began to court the alliance of Lacedæmon; the barbarians flocked to her standards from all quarters. Artaxerxes thought it advisable to attempt a diversion in Greece. He employed Timocrates, a Rhodian, to negotiate with some of the tributary states belonging to Lacedæmon, and to excite them to throw off her yoke, and assert their independence. He found the most of them well-disposed to this attempt, and a purse of fifty talents of the Persian gold hastened their insurrection. A league was formed against Sparta by the states of Argos, Thebes, and Corinth; and Athens soon after joined the confederacy, which gave a sudden turn to the fortunes of Lacedæmon.

The Spartans raised two considerable armies, and commenced hostilities by entering the territory of Phocis. They were defeated; Lysander, one of their generals, being killed in battle, and Pausanias, the other, condemned to death for his misconduct. Much about the same time, the Persian fleet under the command of Conon vanquished that of Sparta, near Cnidus, a city of Caria. This defeat deprived the Lacedæmonians of the command of the sea. Their allies took the opportunity of this turn of affairs to throw off their yoke, and Sparta, almost in a single campaign, saw herself without allies, without power, and without resources. The reverse of fortune experienced by this republic was truly remarkable. Twenty years had not elapsed since she was absolute mistress of Greece, and held the whole of her states either as tributaries or allies, who found it their highest interest to court her favor and protection. So changed was her present situation, that the most inconsiderable of the states of Peloponnesus spurned at her authority, and left her singly to oppose the united power of Persia and the league of Greece.

To escape total destruction, the Lacedæmonians made an overture of peace to the Persians. Antalcidas, commissioned for that purpose, applied to Tiribazus, the governor of Lydia. He laid before him three articles as the conditions of amity and alliance. By the first, the Spartans abandoned to Persia all the Asiatic colonies; by the second, it was proposed that all the allied states of Greece should enjoy their liberty, and the choice of their own laws and form of government; and by the last, it was agreed that such of the states as might acquiesce in these conditions should unite in arms, and compel the others to accede to them. Artaxerxes accepted these propositions, but stipulated further, that he should be put in possession of Cyprus and Clazomene, and that the Athenians should get possession of the islands of Scyros, Lemnos, and Imbros. Some of the principal states of Greece, and Thebes in particular, refused at first to consent to this, which they justly regarded as a humiliating treaty; but, too weak to make an effectual opposition, they yielded to the necessity of their situation.

# CHAPTER III.

REPUBLIC OF THEBES—Pelopidas and Epaminondas—Battle of Leuctra—of Mantinea—General Peace and its consequences—Philip of Macedon—The Sacred War—Demosthenes—Battle of Chæronea—Designs of Philip against Persia—His death.

WHILE the two great republics of Greece, Sparta and Athens, were thus visibly tending to decline, another of the Grecian commonwealths, which had hitherto made no conspicuous figure, now suddenly rose to a degree of splendor which eclipsed all her contemporary states. This was the republic of Thebes, whose sudden elevation from obscurity to the command of Greece is one of the most remarkable occurrences in history.

As Sparta, by the late treaty with Persia, seemed to be regarded as the predominant power in Greece, and to have negotiated (as it may be termed) the fall of the nation, she was naturally induced to endeavor by every means to maintain this character of ascendency, and for that end had her partisans and political agents in all the principal states. The natural consequence of this policy was to excite and maintain in all of them two separate factions; the one the patriotic supporters of liberty and independence, and the other the mean slaves of Lacedæmonian interest. Such, among the rest, was, at this time, the situation of Thebes. The patriotic party in this republic which supported its ancient constitution and independence, was headed by Ismenias; while the opposite faction, which aimed at the establishment of an oligarchy, had for its chief supporter Leontiades, a man firmly devoted to the interest of Sparta. It happened, at this time, that Phœbidas, a Lacedæmonian general, was sent with an army to punish the people of Olynthus, a Thracian city, for an alleged infraction of the late treaty of peace, by making conquests over some of the neighboring states. The Spartans considered themselves as the guarantees of that treaty which they had so main a hand in negotiating, and which professed to secure the independence of the several republics. We shall see how faithfully they discharged this guarantee. Leontiades, the head of the party of the oligarchy at Thebes, prevailed on Phœbidas to second his attempts against the liberties of his country. The Spartan general readily gave his aid, and introducing his army, took possession of the citadel; while the unsuspicious Thebans, trusting to the faith of the treaty, were employed in celebrating the festival of Ceres. Ismenias,

the chief of the democratic faction, was seized and put to death; and the principal men of his party escaped with precipitation from the city.

The conduct of the Spartans, in this juncture, shows how unequal is the conflict between virtue and self-interest. They acknowledged it an act of treason in Leontiades to have thus betrayed his country, and they reprobated the conduct of Phœbidas in giving him aid to a measure which was a direct infraction of a national treaty; but being now masters of Thebes, they did not choose to abandon their acquisition. This shameful conduct was justly censured by all Greece. Four hundred of the chief citizens of Thebes had fled for protection to Athens. Among these was Pelopidas, the greatest and bravest of his country. Maintaining a regular intelligence with such of the citizens as were friends to the cause of justice and patriotism, at the head of whom was the great Epaminondas, a plan was concerted for the recovery of Thebes, which succeeded to the utmost of their wishes. Pelopidas, with eleven of his friends in the disguise of peasants, entered the city in the dusk of the evening, and joined the rest of the conspirators in the house of a principal citizen of the name of Charon. Philidas, who acted as secretary to the polemarchs or chief magistrates of Thebes, was, secretly, a steady friend to the design; and had purposely invited the chiefs of the oligarchy, and the principal of the Spartan commanders, to a magnificent supper at his house; where, as a part of the entertainment, he promised to regale his guests with the company of some of the handsomest of the Theban courtesans. While the guests, warm with wine, eagerly called for the introduction of the ladies, a courier arrived from Athens, and brought a letter to Archias, the chief governor, desiring it to be instantly read, as containing important business. "This is no time," said the voluptuary, "to trouble us with business: we shall consider of that to-morrow." This letter contained a full discovery of the plot. Meantime, Pelopidas and his companions, dressed in female attire, entered the hall, and each drawing a dagger from under his robe, massacred the governor and the whole of the Spartan officers, before they had time to stand upon their defence. The principal of their enemies thus despatched, they entered the houses of several others whom they knew to be hostile to their purpose, and put them likewise to death. Such were the transactions of this busy night. But a strong garrison of 1500 Spartans were in possession of the citadel. Fortunately, a body of 5000 foot and 2000 horse, despatched from Athens, arrived early next morning to the aid of Pelopidas. Epaminondas called to arms all the citizens who wished the deliverance of their country, and put himself at their head: the associated troops laid siege to the citadel; and in a very short time, the Spartans, seeing all resistance vain, agreed to open the gates and save the effusion of blood by instantly evacuating Thebes. The capitulation was

agreed to; and Pelopidas and Epaminondas were hailed the deliverers of their country.*

Thebes was now necessarily involved in a war with Sparta; but she had the assistance of Athens. With this respectable aid, she was, perhaps, a match for her powerful antagonist, but she did not long enjoy the advantage of that alliance: Persia, which since the last peace had acquired a title to mediate in the affairs of Greece, brought about an accommodation between the contending states. All articles were agreed upon, when a small punctilio exasperated the Thebans. They could not bear that their name should be classed among the subject states of Greece: and Sparta was determined that it should. Neither party would yield, and Thebes was excluded from the treaty, which was acceded to by all the other republics.

Thus the Thebans stood alone, in opposition to the league of Greece: but Epaminondas and Pelopidas were their generals. The battle of Leuctra showed how much may be achieved by the patriotic exertions and abilities of a few distinguished individuals. The Theban army, amounting only to 6000 men, commanded by Epaminondas, routed [illegible] 24,000 Lacedæmonians, and left them, with their king, Cleombrotus, dead upon the field. By the law of Sparta, all who fled from the enemy were doomed to suffer a capital punishment: but Xenophon prudently suspended the law for a single day: the Spartans, otherwise, must have lost their whole army.

It is remarkable, that when the news of this great defeat reached Lacedæmon, the citizens were engaged in celebrating the public games, and no immediate concourse of strangers attended that solemnity. The sad intelligence spread a general alarm: but the Ephori, with admirable presence of mind, ordered the games to proceed without interruption. The best method of blunting the edge of misfortune is to brave it. The parents and relations of those who had fallen in battle were next day, in solemn procession, to thank the gods that their sons had died in the bed of glory, while the relatives of those who had escaped, were overwhelmed with shame and affliction.

The petty states of Greece always took part with a victorious power. Epaminondas, determined to push his success, and to penetrate into Laconia, found his little army speedily increased to 70,000 men. With this force he might have razed Lacedæmon

* In this account of the revolution of Thebes, I have followed the authority of Plutarch in preference to that of Xenophon, though, in general, I admit that the credit of the latter is higher than that of the former. But Xenophon, with all his talents and virtues, was a man of strong prejudices; of which there cannot be a more striking example than this very narrative, in the whole of which he never once mentions the name of either Pelopidas or Epaminondas, to whom, not only Plutarch, but the general voice of the ancient authors, has attributed the principal agency in this revolution.

to the ground, and abolished the Spartan name: but he was satisfied with having checked their insolence and perfidy; and he returned to Thebes after having rebuilt the city of Megalopolis, where he collected the Arcadians, and repeopled Messene, from which the Spartans had driven out the inhabitants; thus re-establishing, almost under the walls of Sparta, two of her ancient and most inveterate enemies.

The history of the Grecian states affords too many examples that, under a constitution purely democratic, the public mind is so fickle that the highest efforts of virtue and patriotism are more frequently repaid with ingratitude than with the rewards of honor and popularity. Epaminondas and Pelopidas, on their return to Thebes, were accused of having retained their command four months beyond the term of their commissions, while engaged in the Peloponnesian expedition. This, on the specious pretext of a strict regard to military duty, was adjudged to be a capital offence, and the people were on the point of condemning to death those men who had not only rescued their country from servitude, but raised the Theban name to the highest pitch of glory. Epaminondas undertook to defend the conduct of Pelopidas by taking the whole blame upon himself. "I was," said he, "the author of those measures for which we stand here accused. I had indulged a hope that the signal success which, under our conduct, has attended the Theban arms, would have entitled us to the gratitude, and not to the censure of our country. Well! let posterity, then, be informed of our crimes and of our punishment. Let it be known that Epaminondas led your troops into the heart of Laconia, which no hostile power till then had ever penetrated; that his crime was that he abased the glory of Sparta, and brought her to the brink of ruin; that he made Thebes the most illustrious of the Grecian states; let it be inscribed on his tomb, that death was the reward which his country decreed for these services." The Thebans were ashamed of their own conduct; the judges dismissed the charge, and the people atoned for their ingratitude by the strongest expressions of praise and admiration.

Yet this rectitude of feeling was only temporary. All the states of Peloponnesus supported by Thebes were at war with Sparta. The other republics, however, and principally Athens, were inflamed with jealousy of the Theban power, and, uniting in a league to curb its ascendency, they applied for aid from Persia. To counteract this cooperation the Thebans sent Pelopidas to Artaxerxes, who convinced him that it was more for his real interest to countenance and support their infant power, which could give no jealousy or alarm to his empire, than to add weight to those great republics, which had always been at variance with him. Artaxerxes declared himself the ally of Thebes. The Greek ambassadors were all dismissed, loaded with magnificent presents; Pelopidas alone refused them. In the assembly of the

people at Athens, a porter ludicrously proposed that, instead of nine annual archons, they should elect nine ambassadors of the poorest of the people, and send them every year to Persia.

Epaminondas, at this time, made another descent upon Peloponnesus, when he was opposed by the Spartans, the Athenians, and Corinthians. He was at first successful, but, overpowered at last and obliged to retreat, he returned to Thebes, where his ill fortune was construed into treason, and he was deprived of all command. We shall presently see his fickle countrymen once more disposed to rate his services at their true value.

Macedonia, a few years before this period, was in a state of civil war, from the quarrels for sovereignty which arose between the two sons of Amyntas, upon the death of their father. The Macedonians solicited aid from the Thebans to compose the disorders of their country, and Pelopidas was for that purpose sent thither with an army. He effected the object of his mission by placing Perdiccas on the throne of Macedonia, and he carried with him to Thebes, Philip, the brother of Perdiccas, with thirty of the young nobility, as hostages for the security of this settlement. This was Philip, afterwards the King of Macedon, and father of Alexander the Great: a youth who so profitably employed his time in the study of the art of war under those two able masters, Pelopidas and Epaminondas, that from them he acquired that military knowledge which afterwards proved so fatal to the liberties of Greece.

The people of Thessaly, alarmed at the ambitious designs of Alexander, the *tyrant* of Phera, who aimed at reducing the whole states under his own dominion, solicited the aid of the Thebans to protect their liberties. The Thebans complied with their request, and Pelopidas, sent into Thessaly as an ambassador, to hear the subject of complaint, and to mediate on the part of Thebes, was, in contempt of the law of nations, seized by Alexander and thrown into prison. The Thebans justly resenting this gross outrage, sent an army against the tyrant, and Epaminondas, eager to cooperate in the delivery of his friend Pelopidas, but debarred by the late decree from all military command, joined himself as a private soldier to the expedition. The Theban forces were encountered in the field by an army greatly superior in numbers; and such was the pusillanimity of their generals, that they were on the point of making an ignominious retreat, when the spirit of the troops was roused by the strong feeling of impending disgrace. They compelled their generals to yield the command to Epaminondas, who very speedily turned the fortune of the day, and, after repulsing the tyrant, obliged him to offer terms of accommodation, of which the first condition was the release and restitution of Pelopidas. This signal service of Epaminondas, though performed, as we have seen, at the expense of a new infringement of military duty, the very offence for which he had lately so severely suffered, was now

rewarded by the universal applause of his country, and a complete reinstatement in all his former honors and popularity.

Pelopidas had no sooner recovered his liberty than he resolved to wreak his vengeance against the tyrant of Pheræ. At the head of a new expedition for this purpose he encountered Alexander at Cynoscephalæ, and gave him a complete defeat; but eager to engage the tyrant, whom he challenged to single combat in the field, he unwarily exposed himself on a throw of javelins from the enemy, and fell pierced with numberless wounds. The Thebans justly considered their victory as dearly purchased by the loss of this most brave and virtuous citizen. The Thebans and Thessalonians jointly performed his funeral obsequies with the most distinguished pomp and magnificence. The tyrant of Pheræ was soon after assassinated by his wife and her brothers, who avenged by this blow their own and their country's injuries.

A new war now broke out between Thebes and Sparta, on account of a quarrel between the Tegeans and Mantineans, the former protected by the Thebans, the latter by the Lacedæmonians and Athenians. Epaminondas made hostile attempts upon Lacedæmon, which owed its preservation to the conduct and bravery of Agesilaus. The Theban general, on receiving information that the best of the Spartan troops, with Agesilaus at their head, were on their march to Mantinea, judged this a most favorable opportunity for an attack on Sparta, which, being ill walled, he expected to seize in the night without any opposition. Agesilaus, however, getting a hint of his design, had just time to apprise the city of its danger, and the Thebans had scarcely penetrated into the heart of it; when, to the surprise of Epaminondas, he found himself vigorously attacked by Agesilaus himself and his brave son, Archidamus, with the flower of the Spartan youth, who displayed the greatest courage in making head against the invaders. The Thebans were now forced to make a precipitate retreat. This unsuccessful enterprise was the more grating to Epaminondas, that the term of his military command was just about to expire. He earnestly wished to compensate for his failure by some splendid stroke against the enemy. The Spartan troops, as we have seen, had been suddenly called off from Mantinea to defend their city. Epaminondas now attempted, by a rapid march, to surprise and seize Mantinea; but in the meantime its garrison had been reinforced by an Athenian army, which met the Thebans in front, on their approach to the town, while the Spartans, aware of their design, were following close upon their rear. An engagement now ensued, one of the most celebrated in the Grecian history. The army of the Thebans amounted to 30,000 foot and 3000 horse; that of the Lacedæmonians and their allies to 20,000 foot and 2000 horse.

The battle was fought with the most desperate courage on both sides. The detail of particulars is to be found in Xenophon,

Diodorus, and other historians. The judicious disposition of the Theban army, and their movements during the engagement, showed the profound military skill of their general. In the heat of the battle, the Thebans having broken and repulsed the Lacedæmonian phalanx, Epaminondas, too rashly pursuing his success, had advanced beyond the lines of his troops, when the enemy rallying, he was exposed to a whole shower of darts, and fell, pierced with numberless wounds. His faithful Thebans found means to rescue his body while life yet remained, and to bring him to his tent. A javelin stuck fast in his breast, and his physician declared that on extracting it he would immediately expire. In this extremity, breathless and fainting, while his friends stood weeping around him, he first inquired what was become of his shield, and being told that it was safe, he beckoned to have it brought to him, and kissed it. He then asked which side had gained the victory, and being told it was the Thebans, "Then," said he, "all is well." While some of his friends were lamenting his untimely fall, and regretting that he had left no children to perpetuate his memory; "Yes," said he, 'I have left two fair daughters, *Leuctra* and *Mantinea*—these will perpetuate my memory;"—so saying, with his own hands he drew forth the javelin from his breast, and instantly expired.

The ancient historians have ranked Epaminondas among the greatest heroes and most illustrious characters of antiquity. *Epaminondas princeps cum judicio Graeciæ*, says Cicero. As a general, there needs no other criterion of his merit than to compare the situation in which he found his country, enslaved, oppressed, weak, and inconsiderable, with that in which he left it, the most formidable power in Greece. As a private citizen, his social virtues, the generosity of his disposition, a total disregard of wealth, which his high employments gave him an easy opportunity of accumulating; his eminent philosophical and literary genius, and above all, a modest simplicity of demeanor, which added lustre to all his numerous accomplishments, were the distinguishing features of his character. With him the glory of his country may be said to have been born and to have died: for, from the inauspicious day of his death, the Theban power vanished at once, and that Bœotian republic sunk again into its original obscurity.

Athens and Sparta were humbled in the battle of Mantinea. Thebes was victorious, but she was undone by the death of Epaminondas. All parties were now disposed to peace, and Artaxerxes, more powerful among those infatuated states than in his own dominions of Persia, dictated the terms of the treaty. It was stipulated that each of the states should retain what it then possessed, and that all should enjoy their liberties independent of each other. The Spartans alone refused their assent to this treaty, unwilling to relinquish that control which they considered as their right over some of their tributary cities.

Artaxerxes soon after died of a broken heart. Darius, his eldest son, together with fifty of his natural brothers, had conspired against their father, but their designs were defeated, and they were all put to death. Ochus, the third of his lawful sons, succeeded him. This monster had made his way to the throne by murdering his elder brother, and, to secure his possession, he murdered all that remained of his kindred.

The treaty recently concluded among the states of Greece was fatal in its consequences to the glory of the nation. The greater republics, exhausted and weakened by the war, and now abridged in their power and resources by the independence of the smaller states, were alternately sunk in indolence and apathy, and embroiled by civil contentions. The inferior republics, who derived weight and consideration chiefly from their alliance with the great states who were their protectors, were now forced, in all their quarrels with each other, to rely upon their own strength. No general object united the nation, which now became a discordant mass of unequal and independent parts. In addition to these symptoms of decline, luxury was extending her baneful influence, in enervating and corrupting the patriotic spirit. A taste for the productions of the fine arts, and a passionate pursuit of pleasure, had, in the Athenian republic particularly, entirely supplanted heroic virtue. Poets, musicians, sculptors, and comedians, were now the only great men of Attica. While the bewitching dramas of Sophocles and Euripides charmed the ears, and the sculptures of Phidias, of Glycon, and Praxiteles fascinated the eyes of the refined and voluptuous Athenians, military glory was forgotten; and the defence of the state, no longer the care of its citizens, was committed to mercenaries, who filled both its fleets and its armies. Even in Sparta, luxury had begun to spread her contagion: while her power was shaken by the general treaty, which, though rejected on her part, gave sufficient warrant to all her dependent cities to renounce their allegiance.

In this declining situation of Greece, while she offered a tempting object of ambition to the designs either of a foreign conqueror or a domestic tyrant, the prince of a small monarchy, hitherto quite inconsiderable, began to meditate an attack against her general liberties. This was Philip of Macedon; the same youth whom, as we have observed, a few years before, Pelopidas had carried a hostage to Thebes in security of that establishment he had made, in placing Perdiccas II. on the throne, and composing the disorders of his kingdom.

Philip, while in Thebes, had been the companion of Epaminondas, the pupil of his father Polymnis, and had shared in those excellent lessons which formed the illustrious Theban to be the support and glory of his country. The house of Polymnis, at Thebes, was the resort of the most learned and virtuous men of that country. There Lysidas, of Tarentum, read his lectures on

philosophy; a science in which Epaminondas was no less eminent, by the testimony of all antiquity, than he was in the talents of a great military leader. It was in the latter character rather than the former that he served as a model to the young Philip, who, though of acute talents, had neither the virtues nor the cultivated mind of the illustrious Theban. The regents of Philip raised him to the throne, which was then filled by his nephew Amyntas, the son of his elder brother Perdiccas. The Macedonians declared they wanted not a child, but a man, to be their governor. If great military talents, accompanied with profound political sagacity, could, in a sovereign, compensate for the want of moral qualities and the absence of every generous virtue, Philip was not unworthy to wear a crown.

Scarcely was he seated on that throne, when he was attacked from every quarter. The Dyrrhians and the Paonians made inroads upon his territories. Two rival princes, Pausanias and Argæus, relations of the last monarch, disputed his title, each claiming the sovereignty for himself. The Thracians armed for Pausanias, the Athenians for Argæus. Philip disarmed the Paonians by bribes and promises. The Thracians were won by a similar policy. He gained a victory over the Athenians, in which his rival Argæus lost his life; and having thus accomplished the security of his title to the throne, he attracted to the people of Athens the character of extreme moderation and generosity, by sending back to their country without ransom, all the prisoners he had taken in battle.

In this manner, by the most dexterous policy, he removed a part of his enemies, that he might have the rest at his mercy. However his conduct might in general be justified; for, as yet, his interest had not prompted him to act a dishonorable part. No man wantonly, or through choice, throws away his character. But Philip knew no other source of action but his own interest; and he had no scruples as to the means of accomplishing it. Artifices of every kind, dissimulation, perfidy, breach of promises, and oaths, were with Philip the ordinary and the necessary engines of government. Corruption was his favorite instrument. It was a maxim of his, that no fortification was impregnable into which a mule could make its way with a bag of money. Philip, in his designs against the liberties of Greece, found occasion to employ the utmost extent of his political address, and to exercise, alternately every talent of which he was possessed. He had his pensionaries in all the republics, whose care it was to give him intelligence of every measure, to form a party in his interest, and on all occasions when his enterprises were called in question, to justify his designs and vindicate his proceedings. In Athens, he had in this character Æschines the orator devoted to his interest, and two comedians, Aristodemus and Neoptolemus, men of high influence in the public assemblies. With these illustrious characters in his interest, Philip was at ease with respect to the Athenians.

In the same manner securing his partisans in the other republics, it was now only necessary to set them at variance with each other, that his alliance might be courted, and an opportunity furnished for introducing the Macedonian troops into Greece. The miserable policy and imprudence of the principal republics accomplished his wishes, without giving him even the trouble of an effort.

The Phocians having ploughed up some of the lands which belonged to the temple of Apollo, at Delphos, were cited on that account before the Amphictyonic council, and condemned to pay a heavy fine. Instead of submitting to this decree, they now pretended that the custody of the temple and all its patrimony belonged of right to them; and they boldly seized the sacred edifice with the whole of its treasures. These proceedings put all Greece into a flame. The Phocians had some plausible reasons to assign in support of their claim; otherwise we cannot suppose that the Athenians and Spartans would have espoused their cause, in opposition to most of the other states of Greece, who regarded their conduct as highly sacrilegious. The Thebans, the Thessalians, and the Locrians, armed in the cause of Apollo, and took a most active part in what was termed *the sacred war*. The spirit of hostility acquired additional rancor from religious zeal; and both sides adopted the sanguinary policy of giving no quarter in battle, and putting to death their prisoners without mercy. The Theban general, Philomelos, found himself in this last predicament, and seeing no possibility of escaping out of the hands of a body of the enemy who had surrounded him, threw himself headlong over a precipice.

*The sacred war* had lasted for some time. Philip of Macedon in the meantime was gradually extending his territories, and had already, by conquest, made himself master of a great part of Thrace, when the Thessalians implored his assistance against their tyrant Lycophron, the brother and successor of Alexander of Pheræ, whose government they felt yet more intolerable than that of his predecessor. The tyrant had sought aid of the Phocians to support him against his own subjects, who, on their part, were thus fully justified in courting the assistance of the Macedonians to protect their liberties. After several engagements of various issue, Philip prevailed in driving the Phocians completely out of Thessaly; and Lycophron, finding himself unable to cope with the Macedonian power, resigned his sovereignty and put Philip in possession of his capital of Pheræ.

A short time before this period, his queen, Olympias, the daughter of Neoptolemus, king of Epirus, was delivered at Pella, in the first year of the 106th Olympiad (356 B. C.), of a son, Alexander, justly denominated the Great. On this event, Philip wrote to the philosopher Aristotle in these emphatic words, truly worthy of a king: "Know that a son is born to us. We thank

the gods, first, for their excellent gift, and, secondly, that it is bestowed in the age of Aristotle, who, we trust, will render him a son worthy of his father, and a prince worthy of Macedonia." *

The success which had hitherto attended the arms and the policy of Philip inspired him now with the daring ambition of rendering himself the arbiter and sovereign of Greece. The retreat of the Phocians from Thessaly furnished him with the plausible pretext of advancing with his troops to Thermopylæ, in order to enter the country of Phocis; while his real design was to secure that important pass, which opened to him the territory of Attica. This was a bold attempt: for no foreign power had ever passed that gate of Greece, since the defeat of the Persians at Platæa. The Athenians were justly alarmed, not less for their own safety than for the general liberties of the nation; and they owed the energy of their conduct on this occasion to the manly eloquence and patriotism of Demosthenes.

Demosthenes, the prince of the Grecian orators, now made the first display of his eminent talents. He had no advantages of birth or education. His father, a sword-cutter, or, as Juvenal has termed him, a blacksmith, left him an orphan at the age of seven, to the care of profligate guardians, who robbed him of his small patrimony. But he possessed that native genius which surmounts every disadvantage of birth or situation. Ambition prompted him to the study of oratory; for, going one day to the court to hear the pleadings in some cause of moment, he was so impressed with the eloquence of Callistratus, and so fired by the popular applause bestowed on that orator upon his gaining the suit in which he had pleaded, that he determined from that moment that this should be his road to eminence and distinction. No man, in this arduous course, ever struggled with greater natural obstacles, or more happily overcame them. His voice was harsh and uncouth, his articulation indistinct, and his gestures awkward and constrained; but, sensible of his defects, he labored night and day in private exercises of elocution, till he completely subdued them; and then, confident of his powers, he broke forth at once the most distinguished orator of his age. He had in this emergency of public affairs a noble field of exertion. On the first intelligence that Philip was on his march to Thermopylæ, Demosthenes ascended the tribunal in the Ecclesia, and in a most animated harangue roused the patriotic ardor of his countrymen, by painting to them, in striking colors, the ambitious designs of this artful and enter-

* Aristotle, by birth a Stagyrite, came to Athens at the age of eighteen, and was for twenty years a scholar of Plato, who died 348 B. C. In the forty third year of his age he went to Macedonia, and was for eight years employed in the education of Alexander; at the end of which period he returned to Athens, 335 B. C., and taught for twelve years in the Lyceum. He died in his sixty-third year, 322 B. C., a year after the death of his illustrious pupil.

prising prince; and urged the absolute necessity of an immediate and most vigorous effort for the preservation of the national liberty. His eloquence was successful. The Athenians instantly flew to arms, and arrived at Thermopylæ in sufficient time to defend the entry to the straits. Philip was disconcerted at this unexpected proof of loyalty from the Athenians, with whom he had taken the utmost pains by every means to ingratiate himself; but he was too prudent to hazard a premature discovery of the extent of his ambitious views. He made a plausible pretext for withdrawing his troops to the northward, and postponed for that time his vengeance against the unwilling Phocians. The Athenians, imposed on by this politic conduct, began to consider their fears of danger as altogether groundless, and were lulled into a pleasing dream of perfect security.

The sacred war had now lasted about ten years; and every campaign had given a fresh augmentation of power to the daring and politic Macedonian. The Athenians, finding no advantage on their part, and heartily tired of hostilities, which gave too much interruption to their private ease and luxurious enjoyments, sent ambassadors to Philip with instructions to negotiate a general peace. But he bribed the ambassadors, spun out the negotiations, and in the mean time proceeded in the most vigorous prosecution of the war. This conduct might have opened the eyes of the Athenians, had not their corrupted orators, the pensioners of Philip, labored assiduously to foster their blind security. "The interests of Philip (said Æschines) are the same with your own. Why therefore this groundless jealousy and alarm at all his motions? Let him once pass Thermopylæ, and you will see what will be his conduct. His darling object is the destruction of your enemies. His design is to subdue Thebes, that insolent rival of the Athenian power and sovereignty. In this enterprise he wishes only to co-operate with yourselves; and when accomplished, as it speedily must be, by your joint endeavors, Athens has then the full command of Greece." This infatuated people were actually the dupes of such chimeras.

The Athenians withdrew their army from Thermopylæ; Philip poured down like a torrent upon the country of Phocis, and carrying all before him, presented himself at Delphos as the avenger of Apollo. He then hastily assembled the Amphictyonic council, taking care previously to sound the deputies of the several states, and to admit only such as were devoted to his interest. The assembly, thus prepared, passed a decree which declared the Phocians to have forfeited their place in that general council, which henceforth should be supplied by the king of Macedon, whom, in consideration of his important services, they appointed to preside at the Pythian games, jointly with the Thebans and Thessalians. Thus, by the most artful policy, Philip had acquired the rights of a naturalized Greek, his dominions of Macedonia now formed a part of the body of the nation, and he had henceforth an

undisputed title to take a part in all such measures as regarded the general and national interests.

From that moment Philip became the arbiter of Greece, and the umpire in all differences between her contending states. While the more powerful republics courted his friendship to assist them in their ambitious designs against each other, or against the liberty of the smaller states, these, on the other hand, solicited his protection to defend their rights against lawless usurpation and tyranny. Others, again, who fell under neither of those descriptions, but were embroiled with factions at home, besought his aid to compose their domestic dissensions, and would have cheerfully parted with their liberty to rid themselves of the miseries of tumult and anarchy.

In this situation of Greece, the policy of Demosthenes, who incessantly endeavored to rouse the Athenians to a vigorous opposition to the designs of Philip, and even urged them to declare open war against this ambitious prince, have been by some writers censured as imprudent and pernicious; and it is no doubt a truth that some of the first patriots of Athens, the virtuous Phocion for example, were of this opinion, and proposed an opposite counsel. They saw that the martial spirit of the republic was extinct, the finances of the state were at the lowest ebb, and the manners of the people irretrievably corrupted. There was assuredly too much solidity in the argument of Phocion which he opposed to the *Philippics* of Demosthenes: — "I will recommend to you, O Athenians, to go to war, when I find you capable of supporting a war; when I see the youth of the republic animated with courage, yet submissive and obedient; the rich cheerfully contributing to the necessities of the state; and the orators no longer cheating and pillaging the public." But granting the verisimilitude of this degrading picture, was it not a noble ambition in Demosthenes to revive the martial spirit, to stimulate by shame the indolence of his countrymen, to hold up in glowing colors to their view the striking contrast between the days of former glory and of present disgrace, and to excite to some great and patriotic exertion for the recovery of the national honor and the preservation of their liberties?

When Athens was thus roused to a vigorous exertion for the preservation of Grecian freedom, it was surely to be hoped, and confidently expected, that she was not to stand alone in that noble effort of patriotism. But even had none of the other republics followed her example, and joined her standards, that circumstance, instead of diminishing, must have signally enhanced her honor, and afforded the only possible consolation in the event that the issue was unprosperous. "No," said Demosthenes, in a tone of animation which fired the whole assembly, "it can never be to your reproach that you have braved dangers and death for the safety and freedom of your country. I swear it by our brave forefathers, by the manes of those illustrious men who fell at Marathon, at

Plataea, and at Salamis, by their sacred ashes which sleep with honor in the public monuments."* It was in a similar strain of glowing eloquence that Demosthenes roused the torpid spirits of his countrymen to a vigorous effort to preserve their independence against the designs of this artful and ambitious prince: and Philip had just reason to say that he was more afraid of *that man* than of all the fleets and armies of the Athenians. It was highly, therefore, to the honor of the Athenians that they listened to the counsels of this excellent orator, and, however unequal to the contest, determined that they would dearly sell their freedom. The Thebans joined them in this noble resolution, persuaded likewise by the eloquence of Demosthenes, who went thither as ambassador from Athens to form an alliance for their joint interests against the Macedonian. It was now no shame to court the aid of Persia; and a league was formed likewise with the islands of Rhodes, Cos, and Chios. A fleet was armed under the command of Chares to relieve Byzantium, then besieged by Philip; but Chares, of whom the allies had no favorable opinion, was soon after superseded by Phocion; for this illustrious man, though in his private judgment more inclined to peace, was in war justly regarded as the main support of his country's honor and glory.

Phocion delivered Byzantium and Perinthus from the yoke of Macedon, drove Philip out of the Chersonesus, and took several of his dependent cities. The Macedonian loudly complained of the Athenians, as having first commenced hostilities; and the artful dissembler, still further to preserve a show of moderation, requested a renewal of the peace. A negotiation for that purpose was prolonged by him for two years. Demosthenes still raised his voice for war. It was upon this occasion that the Athenians, having consulted the Delphian oracle, which advised them to make peace, Demosthenes, in an animated harangue, openly insinuated that the oracle was corrupted, by declaring that the *Pythia Philippized*. The eloquence of the orator prevailed over the counsel of the hireling priestess, and the Athenians took the field in great force, joined by the Thebans and their other allies. It was the interest of Philip, who had long wished, and, consequently, prepared himself for a fair trial of strength, to bring his enemy as soon as possible to a general engagement. This the Athenians ought of course to have as earnestly avoided; but the disunion of counsels which commonly attend allied armies, was the cause of a fatal resolution to abide a decisive issue. This took place in the field of Chæronea.

The Macedonian army amounted to 30,000 foot and 2000 horse; that of the Athenians and their allies was nearly equal in number. The left wing of the Macedonians was commanded by

* Demosth. Orat. pro Corona.

the young Alexander, and it was his fortune to be opposed by that body of the Thebans called the *sacred band*; the courage of the combatants on both sides was therefore inflamed by a high principle of honor. The attack of Alexander was impetuous beyond all description, but was sustained with the most determined bravery on the part of the Thebans; and had the courage and conduct of their allies given them an adequate support, the fortune of the day would probably have been fatal to the Macedonians; but, assailed by the steady cooperation of the main body of the Greeks, the *sacred band* were left alone to sustain this desperate assault, and they fought till the whole of these noble Thebans lay dead upon the field. The Athenians, however, on their part, had made a most vigorous attack on the centre of the Macedonian army, and broke and put to flight a great body of the enemy. Philip, at the head of his formidable phalanx, was not engaged in the fight, but coolly watched his attack till he saw the Greeks pursuing their success against the centre with a tumultuous impetuosity. He then charged them in the rear with the whole strength and solidity of his phalanx opposed to their deranged and disorderly battalions. The aspect of affairs was now quite changed, and the Grecian army, after a desperate conflict, was broken and entirely put to flight. Two thousand Greeks were made prisoners, and Philip gained the praise of great clemency by checking the slaughter of the Athenians and sparing the lives of all his captives. It was now his policy to soothe and conciliate the minds of that people whom he wished henceforth to rule as a legitimate sovereign. This decisive engagement, which, in its immediate consequences, put an end to the liberties of Greece, was fought in the year 338 before Christ.

The Athenians sought a desperate consolation in attributing their defeat at Chæronea to the fault of their generals Lysidas and Chares. The former they condemned to death; the latter owed his life to the boldness and intrepidity with which he made his defence.

Demosthenes had fled from the field of battle; so different is speculative from active courage. Yet the merits of this illustrious man were not forgotten, though the issue of his counsels had been unsuccessful. He was entrusted by the Athenians with the charge of rebuilding the walls of the city, and a crown of gold was decreed to him, at the suggestion of Ctesiphon, as the reward of his public services. This mark of honor excited the jealousy of his rival Æschines, and gave rise to that famous controversy *περὶ Στεφάνου* (i. e. *concerning the crown*) — which produced two of the most animated orations that are preserved to us of the composition of the ancients. Demosthenes came off triumphant, and his opponent was banished from his country. Cicero, in his third book "De Oratore," c. 56, has recorded a very beautiful anecdote on this occasion. Æschines, in exile among the Rhodians, amused

himself with reciting to that people some of his own orations. Among others, he intimated to them that which he had spoken against Demosthenes, *on the crown of the crown*. The Rhodians expressed a desire to hear what his opponent had answered to a composition so powerful and convincing. He then read to them, with proper modulation of voice and emphasis, the oration of Demosthenes, which, when they had all united in admiring—"Think now, my friends," said he, "how much greater must have been your admiration had you heard the extraordinary man himself recite this masterly composition." A singular instance indeed of his generosity of mind, who could thus do justice to the merits of a rival, whose success and triumph had been the cause of his own disgrace.

It may be justly said that of all those sciences which deserve the name of manly or truly dignified, eloquence was the only one which yet continued to flourish in Greece.

After the battle of Chæronea all the states of Greece submitted to the conqueror. But it was not the policy of Philip to treat them as a conquered people. He knew that the Greeks must be very cautiously managed. He took care to withdraw their minds from all idea of the degraded condition to which they were now reduced. His views had pointed to a greater object of ambition than the sovereignty of Greece; and in proposing to them the conquest of Persia, he withdrew their attention from the galling thought of their own servitude, while he flattered their self-consequence by making the Greeks the partners in his own schemes of extensive dominion. It was a natural preparatory measure to appoint Philip the generalissimo of the nation.

At this period the Persian monarchy was embroiled with the revolt of several of the provinces. Ochus had reduced them less by force of arms than by corrupting and bringing over to his interest the heads of the rebellion. Mentor of Rhodes delivered up to him the Sidonians, who, when they discovered that they were betrayed, set fire to their city and perished in the flames. The dreadful catastrophe was followed by the submission of all Phœnicia; and Cyprus, which had likewise revolted, returned soon after to its allegiance. Mentor's services were rewarded by the Persian monarch with the government of all the Asiatic coasts. Ochus did not long enjoy the pacification of his empire. Bagoas, a favorite eunuch, poisoned him and all his children, except Arses, the youngest, whose infancy afforded the murderer the prospect of governing Persia as his tutor; but dreading the punishment of his crimes, he thought it his safest policy to raise to the throne a prince of the royal blood, Darius, surnamed Codomannus, who is said to have been the grandson of Darius Nothus.

Such was the state of Persia when Philip prepared for his great enterprise, by sending his lieutenants Attalus and Parmenio into Asia. As usual before all expeditions of importance, he con-

sulted the Delphic oracle, and received the following response, equally applicable to the prosperous or unsuccessful event of the war: — *The bull is ready crowned; his end approaches, and he will soon be sacrificed.* "The prophecy," said Philip, "is quite clear: the bull is the monarch of Persia." The prediction speedily found its accomplishment, but Philip himself was the victim. While engaged in celebrating a magnificent festival on the marriage of his daughter Cleopatra with the king of Epirus, and walking in solemn procession to the temple, he was struck into the heart with a dagger by Pausanias, a noble youth who had been brutally injured by Attalus, the brother-in-law of Philip, and to whom that prince had refused to do justice. Philip had in the latter period of his reign disgraced himself by some strong acts of tyranny, the fruit of an uncontrolled indulgence of vicious appetites. As the pretext of a divorce from his queen Olympias, the mother of Alexander, he threw the most unjust suspicions upon her character, and drove her son from court in disgust at the conduct of his father, who now assumed Cassandra, the niece of Attalus, who had captivated him by the charms of her person, into the place of his injured queen. The disgust which Alexander justly conceived at these proceedings, encouraged a suspicion, for which, however, there are no solid grounds, that he was privy to the design of Pausanias.

The Athenians, with much meanness, expressed, on occasion of Philip's death, the most tumultuous joy. A solemn sacrifice of thanksgiving was offered to the gods, and a crown of gold decreed to Pausanias in reward of his services to the nation. It is probable that a gleam of hope arose from this event that the liberty of Greece might yet be recovered; but they were strangers at this time to the character of that youth who now succeeded to the throne of Macedonia.

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## CHAPTER IV.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT takes and destroys Thebes — Submission of the Grecian States — Alexander declared General of the Armies of Greece — Battle of the Granicus — Issus — Siege of Tyre — Expedition into Egypt — Battle of Arbela — Alexander at Persepolis — Expedition to India — Return to Susa — Enters Babylon, and dies — Division of his Empire — Kingdom of Egypt — of Syria.

ALEXANDER was in the twentieth year of his age when he succeeded, by the death of Philip, to the throne of Macedonia. This

prince, possessed of all the military abilities of his father, inherited a soul more truly noble, and an ambition yet more unbounded. He had from his infancy given proofs of that singular heroism of character, which marked the conqueror of the eastern world. To extraordinary endowments of nature he had joined all the advantages of education. Under the tutelage of the philosopher Aristotle, he imbibed not only a taste for learning and the sciences, but those excellent lessons of politics, in which that great teacher was qualified, beyond all his contemporaries, to instruct him.

On the first intelligence of the death of Philip, the Greeks, and particularly the citizens of Athens, exhibited that pitiful exultation, which only evinced their own pusillanimity. The Macedonian heir they regarded as a mere boy, from whom the liberties of Greece could never be in serious hazard: as he would, they conceived, find sufficient employment both for his policy and prowess in securing the stability of his hereditary throne against domestic faction. Lest, however, the example of Philip might encourage his son to similar schemes of ambition, the Athenians thought it a prudent measure to form an offensive and defensive league with several of the Grecian states, against the new king of Macedonia, with the view of maintaining entire the national independence. Alexander beheld these measures in silence: the time was not yet come for the full display of that great plan of empire, which his comprehensive mind had formed. The Thracians, however, with the Paeonians and Illyrians, having made the death of Philip the signal of emancipation from the newly imposed yoke of Macedon, Alexander made the first essay of his arms against these barbarous nations, whose revolt he chastised with the most signal severity.*

The Greeks were speedily roused from their dream of security: but their surprise was extreme when they beheld the Macedonian pour down with his army upon Boeotia, and present himself at the gates of Thebes. The Thebans, on a false report of his death in battle against the Illyrians, had expelled the Macedonian garrison, and put to death its commanders, Amyntas and Timolaus. Alexander offered pardon to the city on condition of absolute submission, and the delivering up of the principal offenders. The Thebans were obstinate, and the consequence was, that Thebes was taken by storm, and abandoned to the fury of the Macedonian troops, who plundered and destroyed it. Six thousand of the inhabitants were put to the sword, and thirty thousand sold to slavery. The priests, however, with their families, were treated with reverence; and while the streets and fortifications of the city were reduced to a mass of ruins, the conqueror showed his respect to the memory of Pindar, by preserving from destruction the great poet's house, which was still occupied by his descendants.

* For ample details of this, and of all the subsequent campaigns of Alexander, see vol. iii. of the Family Library.

This exemplary severity struck terror throughout all Greece. The Athenians, elevated with the smallest glimpse of good fortune, were the first to show an abatement of spirit. They had received, after the fall of Thebes, a part of the fugitive citizens. For this act of humanity they now thought it necessary to apologize, by sending an embassy to Alexander, to deprecate his wrath, and to assure him of their sincere desire to maintain a friendly alliance. The Macedonian, contenning them the more for the meanness of this behavior, made a peremptory demand that they should deliver up to him the persons of Demosthenes, Lycurgus, and six others of the principal demagogues, to whose seditious harangues he attributed the hostile spirit they had shown to all his measures. He did not, however, wish to push matters to extremity. The business was finally compromised by a public decree, by which the Athenians pledged themselves to institute a strict inquiry into the alleged ground of offence, and to inflict such punishment as the crimes, if proved, should merit.

The submission of Athens was followed by friendly embassies, and offers of peace and alliance from all the states of Greece. Alexander now summoned a general council of deputies, from all the several republics, to assemble at Corinth, with the purpose of deliberating on a measure which regarded their common interests and honor. Here he formally intimated to them his design of following out the great project of his father, the conquest of Persia. The design was flattering to the Greeks, who had ever regarded the Persians as an irreconcilable enemy, the object of hereditary hatred and jealousy; and in whose destruction they pleased themselves with the prospect of regaining the honorable ascendency they had once enjoyed above all the contemporary nations. Animated with this feeling, they received the proposal of Alexander with exultation; and already anticipating the triumphs to be gained under his banners, they hailed him commander-in-chief of the united armies of Greece.

The preparations commenced by Philip were continued by Alexander during the few months of winter that preceded the opening of this important campaign; but active as we may believe those preparations were, they bore no proportion to the magnitude of the enterprise. In fact, the chief prospect of its success arose, not from the strength of the invader, but from the weakness of the invaded empire. We have already remarked* the very defective system of government in this extensive monarchy, and the total want of all principle of union between the members of so vast a body. The people, over whom their governors or satraps tyrannized with the most absolute authority, were quite indifferent to any changes that might take place in the seat of empire. Thus

* See Chapter II. of this book, toward the conclusion.

we have seen an eunuch depose and put to death one monarch with all his descendants, and place another on the throne, without producing any other effects than might have followed in other kingdoms upon a sovereign changing his first minister. The truth is, that the general peace of the empire had ever arisen out of its general weakness. The provinces had as little communication with each other as they had with the capital; and these separate and independent bodies had not even the slight bond of union which arises from a common religion. A despot of high spirit and a vigorous mind might have kept in order this discordant mass; but such was not the character of the present monarch. Darius Codomannus, who owed his elevation to the eunuch Bagoas, was a prince possessed of many amiable qualities—of a gentle and humane disposition; who might have swayed with honor a pacific sceptre, in a nation enjoying a good political constitution, and governed by wholesome laws; but he was neither qualified to fill the throne of Persia, nor to be the antagonist of Alexander.

This prince, who, in all his enterprises, never indulged a doubt of his success, set out for Persia in the beginning of spring, at the head of an army of thirty-five thousand men, and furnished with provisions only for a single month. He had committed to Antipater the government of Macedonia, in his absence. With this inconsiderable army, but excellently disciplined, and commanded by many brave and able officers, who had gained experience under the banner of his father Philip, he arrived in six days' march at the passage of the Hellespont, and crossed the narrow sea without opposition. While traversing Phrygia, he is reported to have visited the tomb of Achilles; and, in an apostrophe to the shade of that great warrior, is said to have expressed his envy of his happiness, who in life enjoyed the comfort of a faithful friend, and after his death had his name immortalized by the greatest of poets.

Darius, on the first intelligence of the advance of Alexander with this trifling force, resolved to crush at once this inconsiderate young man, and despatched immediately an army of 100,000 foot and 10,000 horse, to the banks of the Granicus, a small river of Mysia, which discharges itself into the Propontis. This measure of the Persian monarch was contrary to the opinion of his ablest generals, who counselled him to follow a more protracted plan of warfare. They advised him to lay waste the provinces through which lay the course of the Macedonian army, and to limit all his attacks to a skirmishing warfare, merely with the view of harassing and wearing out the enemy by fatigue and want of provisions. This is said to have been the counsel of Memnon, Darius's ablest general; who proposed at the same time to conduct an army to Greece and Macedonia, to retaliate upon the invaders in their own territory. But when Darius compared his own force and resources with those of his antagonist, it wore with him the aspect of a mean

and dastardly policy, to ruin some of the finest provinces of his empire in the hope of starving the army of his antagonist, instead of manfully encountering him in the field. The latter advice, of making a diversion in Macedonia, was more suitable to a manly spirit, and it was accordingly adopted.

Meantime, the Persians, under the command of the Satrap of Phrygia, were drawn up in formidable array upon the eastern bank of the Granicus, to oppose the passage of the Greeks. The river is of inconsiderable breadth and depth, but of great rapidity. The Macedonians, therefore, with judicious precaution, entered the ford a great way higher than the place of the opposite shore on which they meant to land; and crossing in an oblique direction, had the aid of the stream impelling forward their ranks, while its current gave a powerful obstruction to the enemy's entering the river and disputing with them the passage of the ford. Thus a large body of the Grecian army crossed the stream, with no other annoyance than what arose from the missile weapons of the Persians, and the spears that met the first ranks on gaining the opposite shore. No sooner, however, had these made good their ground, and by the spirit of their attack given full occupation to the opposing Persians, than the main body of the Grecian army passed without resistance. The contest was not long doubtful. The Persians are allowed to have fought with great courage; but such was the impression made by the determined resolution and intrepidity of the Greeks, while Alexander himself led them on against the thickest ranks of the enemy, that the Persian army was broken and put to flight, before the rear of the Grecian forces had passed the river. According to the account of Arrian, 10,000 of the Persian infantry and 2500 horse were slain in the battle of the Granicus. Among these were many officers of distinguished value and ability. The loss of the Greeks amounted to the trifling number of eighty-five horsemen and thirty infantry. These were next day buried with their arms, all in the same grave. The rich spoils of the Persian army Alexander sent home to Macedonia, to be presented to his mother, as the first fruits of his success: and to Athens he sent 300 Persian shields, with this message, that these were the trophies of a victory gained by *the Greeks* under *his command*, over their *ancient enemies*.

This first and important victory facilitated to Alexander the conquest of all the lesser Asia. Sardis, the capital of the ancient Lydian kingdom, submitted without opposition, and Miletus and Halicarnassus, after a short but vigorous defence, opened their gates to the conqueror. Deriving a presage of continued victory from his first successes, Alexander now sent orders to his fleet to return to Macedonia, thus leaving to his little army one only alternative, that they must conquer or perish. Memnon, in the mean time, had sailed with a body of Persian troops to the coast of Greece. He began by an assault upon some of the islands. He

made himself master of Chios, and of the greater part of Lesbos; and had laid siege to Mitylene, its chief city, whence he proposed to pass into Eubœa, and thence into Attica. This well concerted diversion might, in all probability, have checked the progress of Alexander in Asia. But the death of Memnon destroyed this promising scheme; and the armament returned without effect to the coast of Phœnicia.

Alexander pursuing his course through the lower Asia, it was the counsel of Darius's best officers, that he should await his approach in the plains of Assyria, where there might be ample space for bringing into action the whole of his immense force; but this advice was too mortifying to the pride of the monarch of Persia, who, though of mild and gentle manners, was a man of high spirit and of great personal courage. He was impatient to check the presumption of Alexander, and, advancing to meet him, rashly entered the passes between the mountains of Cilicia, near the town of Issus; a situation where, from the nature of the ground, the greatest part of his army, if then attacked, could not possibly be brought to act with effect against the enemy. Alexander, though then weakened by disease — (the consequence of a fever caught by imprudently bathing, when overheated, in the river Cydnus) — no sooner received intelligence of the critical situation of the Persians in the defiles of a mountainous country, than he hastened with the utmost ardor to attack them. Arrian, Quintus Curtius, and Plutarch, have all given different statements of the number of the Persian army at the battle of Issus; but the lowest of these accounts make the number amount to 400,000. The same historians have lavished all the powers of description in painting the splendor, riches, and magnificence of the military equipage of this immense host. That body of the Persians named the Immortals, consisted of 10,000 chosen troops, who were clothed in robes of gold embroidery, adorned with precious stones, and wore about their necks massy collars of pure gold. The chariot of Darius was supported by statues of gold; and the beams, axle, and wheels, were studded with precious stones. Ten thousand horsemen followed the chariot with lances plated with silver. The mother and the wife of Darius had their separate chariots, attended by a numerous train of females on horseback; and the pageant was closed by a vast retinue of the wives of the Persian nobles and their children, guarded by some companies of foot lightly armed.

Darius, caught thus at unawares, in the mountains of Cilicia, with this immense but most inefficient force, was taught, in the battle of Issus, how little confidence is to be placed in numbers, when matched against a few experienced and well-disciplined troops. The Persians were defeated with immense slaughter, their loss amounting, as is said, to 110,000 men, while that of the Macedonians, according to Diodorus and Quintus Curtius, was no

more than 450. Darius himself displayed great personal courage. He fought from his chariot till his horses were wounded, and its course obstructed by the heaps of dead which covered the ground.

I cannot omit observing here, with regard to the history of Alexander written by Quintus Curtius, that, although it is one of the most elegant works that remain to us of the compositions of antiquity, its authority is not to be put on a par with that of Arrian or Diodorus. All accounts, indeed, of the exploits of Alexander, must wear an air of the marvellous: for many even of those facts which we know to be strictly true are in themselves prodigious. This consideration, which has rendered Diodorus and Arrian the more cautious in admitting nothing into their narratives but what rested on the strictest historical evidence, has served with Curtius only as a temptation and license for amplification and embellishment. Yet it must be owned that some of those embellishments are in themselves so pleasing, that we can scarcely wish them to have been spared. Such, among others, is that admirable and strongly characteristic oration which Curtius puts into the mouth of the Scythian chief, addressing himself to Alexander: such is that beautiful scene which Curtius describes to have passed in the tent of Darius, after the battle of Issus: the error of Sysagambis, the queen-mother, who addressed herself to Hephæstion, mistaking him for Alexander: the fine saying on that occasion of Alexander, *Non erravit, mater, nam et hic Alexander est*; circumstances, indeed, which Arrian likewise relates, though not with the assurance of their perfect authenticity. There is, says he, such a dignity in the expression, that if we cannot rest on the story as a certainty, we ought at least to wish it to be true. To the honor of Alexander, it must be owned, that generosity was a strong ingredient in his nature: and that the humane affections, though at times overpowered, and apparently extinguished in the heat of passion, certainly formed a part of his genuine character. To the mother, and to the kindred of Darius, he behaved with the respect and kindness of a son and of a brother, a conduct which made a deep impression on the mind of that generous and ill-fated prince.

Darius, with a few scattered remains of his army, had made a precipitate retreat during the night, and, taking his course eastward, crossed the Euphrates at Thapsacus. His empty war-chariot and cloak falling into the hands of the Macedonians, gave rise to a report of his death, which threw his queen and the captive princesses into agonies of despair. But Alexander hastened to undeceive them, and calmed their agitated minds by repeated assurances of his clemency and protection. He received, a few days after the battle, a deputation from Darius, conceived, as he thought, in a strain of pride unsuitable to the present circumstances of that prince. The Persian demanded that his wife and the captive

princesses should be immediately restored on payment of a ransom; and declared his resolution to bring into the field an army that should fully repair his late disasters. Alexander replied, that when his antagonist should think proper to throw himself on the mercy of his conqueror, he would then convince him that he needed no bribe to excite him to an act of humanity.

The consequence of the battle of Issus was the submission of all Syria. The city of Damascus, where Darius had deposited a large part of the royal treasures, was betrayed by its governor and given up to Parmenio, who found in it above 300 of Darius's concubines, and many of the officers of the king's household. The Phœnicians had suffered much oppression under the Persian yoke, and were thus glad to be emancipated from its tyranny. Strato, the king or governor of Sidon, attempted in vain to maintain his province in its allegiance; he was deposed, and Alexander having allowed his favorite Hephæstion to dispose of the crown, he conferred it on Abdolonymus, a man of great worth and virtue, and of illustrious and even royal descent; but whom misfortunes had reduced to seek a subsistence by manual labor.

Alexander had hitherto borne his good fortune with singular and becoming moderation. Happy, says Curtius, had this moderation attended him through life: but prosperity had not yet corrupted his ingenuous mind. *Felix, si hac continentiâ ad ultimum vitæ perseverare potuisset; sed nondum Fortuna se animo ejus infuderat.*

He now directed his course towards Tyre; and desired to be admitted into the city to perform a solemn sacrifice to Hercules. The Tyrians sent him a golden crown, as a token of their respect and amity, but refused his request; declaring their purpose of observing a neutral conduct, and maintaining their liberty, while the fate of the Persian empire was in dependence. This city was of importance to Alexander, as a strongly fortified station, which gave him free access to the sea from all the neighboring coast. His pride, too, was piqued, and he determined to make himself master of the place, at whatever cost. The city was situated on a small island, about half a mile from the main land. It was fortified by a wall of immense strength, and of 150 feet in height, leaving no space between its base and the sea which surrounded it on every side. It was, therefore, unassailable from the quarter of the land, unless by filling up the intermediate distance by a mole or pier, extending from the shore to the foot of the walls. This operation, the more difficult that the water was of considerable depth, was resolutely undertaken by the Macedonians. The labor and the fatigue attendant on its execution were incredible, for they had to do with an enemy, whose spirit and resolution were equal to their own, and who possessed every advantage that the strength and height of their fortifications, as well as a numerous armament of galleys, could give them for annoying the assailants.

the works were destroyed as soon as reared; nor could the Macedonians ever have succeeded in their enterprise, had they not collected from all the neighbouring sea-ports now under their control, a naval force to beat off the Tyrian galleys, and thus protect the operations of the besieging army. By incredible perseverance, the mole was at length completed, in the seventh month of the siege: the engines of the Greeks assailed the walls on one side, while the ships of war made a vigorous attack on one of the piers of the city in the opposite quarter. A large breach was at length effected, and the Macedonians entered the city, putting all to the sword who opposed them. The detail of this seige by Arrian is one of the most interesting narratives which the writings of the ancients have preserved to us.

Alexander, incensed at the opposition he had met with, and the losses his army had sustained, forgot his usual clemency. He ordered the city to be razed to the ground: 8000 of the inhabitants had been put to the sword, in the final assault and entry of the Macedonians; of the prisoners taken with arms in their hands, 2000 were crucified, and the rest, to the amount of 30,000, sold as slaves. The conduct of Alexander was yet more inhuman on the taking of Gaza, which immediately followed the capture and demolition of Tyre.* This city was deemed impregnable, from its elevated situation on the summit of a steep hill, and from the great strength of its fortifications. It was yet better defended by its garrison, and the intrepidity of its commander, Betis, who resolved to resist the invaders to the last extremity. The military engines employed against Tyre were now planted against the fortifications of Gaza. In a sally from the town, the besieged set fire to the works of the Greeks, and in a desperate conflict, attended with great slaughter on both sides, Alexander himself was dangerously wounded in the shoulder by a heavy dart thrown from a catapult. At length, after repeated assaults, the city was taken by storm, and its brave inhabitants perished almost to a man. The governor, Betis, whose noble defence of his country was

* It is proper here to mention, that Josephus is the only writer who relates an extraordinary scene between Alexander and the high-priest of the Jews. This historian informs us, that, after the taking of Tyre, the conqueror pursued his course to Jerusalem, which had incurred his resentment, from the refusal to furnish supplies to his army during the siege of Tyre. Jaddua, the high-priest of the Jews, arrayed in his pontifical vestments, went forth to meet him in solemn procession. The king, as is said, no sooner beheld this venerable figure, who wore a mitre inscribed on the front with the sacred name of Jehovah, than he prostrated himself at his feet. His courtiers expressing their surprise and even offence at this, which they deemed a degrading conduct in their sovereign, "Do not wonder," said he, "at what you now see; this same venerable man appeared to me at Dium, in Macedonia, and assured me that the God whom he served would give me the sovereignty of the Persian empire." It is a sufficient confutation of this story to remark, that neither Arrian nor any other of the professed historians of Alexander make the smallest mention of it. See *L'Examen Critique des Histoires d'Alexandre.*

worthy of the applause even of an enemy, was dragged round the walls of the city at the wheels of Alexander's chariot. "The king," says Curtius, "gloried that, in this instance, he imitated the example of his progenitor Achilles, in the vengeance he took on the dead body of Hector."

Darius had sent a second embassy to Alexander, while he was engaged in the siege of Tyre. The Persian now assumed a humbler tone. He offered ten thousand talents for the ransom of his mother and his queen, and he agreed to give Alexander his daughter Statira in marriage, with all the Asiatic provinces to the westward of the Euphrates for her portion. When these terms were made known to the Macedonian officers, Parmenio could not help remarking, that, were he Alexander, he would not hesitate a moment to accept of them: "And I," replied the king, "might think so too, were I Parmenio."

The views of Alexander were now directed to the conquest of Egypt. In a council of war which he held after the taking of Tyre, he laid open to his officers the plan of policy which directed his measures, both in the making himself master of the whole coast of Phœnicia and of Egypt—measures which appear at first sight to be deviations from his principal object, the reduction of the Persian empire. He wisely judged that the main obstacle to the accomplishment of this end was the naval force of the Persians and the command they had both of the Phœnician and Egyptian sea-coasts, along with the isle of Cyprus, whence they could at all times, from a variety of quarters, make attacks upon Greece and Macedonia. Of the allegiance of the Greeks Alexander had no assurance. The Spartans were openly hostile to his sovereignty. In these circumstances, it was obviously his wisest plan to secure, in the first place, the dominion of the sea; when this was once attained, the conquest of Persia, already half achieved, appeared an object which might be accomplished with ease.

In prosecution of these views, Alexander, after leaving a strong garrison in Gaza, directed his course to Egypt. The whole country submitted without opposition. At Memphis, he made a solemn sacrifice to the Egyptian gods, acknowledging their affinity to the deities of Greece; a stroke of wise policy which had a great effect in conciliating the allegiance of the people to their new sovereign. In the same views he planned and founded a great city at the mouth of the Nile, to which he gave his own name; a situation so happily chosen, and with such advantages of nature, that within the space of twenty years, Alexandria rose to great wealth and consequence, and has ever since maintained its rank among the first commercial sea-ports both in ancient and in modern times. Above twenty other cities bearing the name of Alexandria were reared in the course of Alexander's various expeditions. It is such works as these which justly entitle the Macedonian to the epithet of *Great*. By the cities which he built, by rearing in the

midst of deserts those nurseries of population and of industry, he repaired the waste and havoc of his conquests. Without those monuments of his real glory, posterity might have agreed in bestowing on him an epithet synonymous to that by which he is yet known among the brahmins of India—*the mighty Murderer*.

The next enterprise of Alexander, although it has furnished opposite constructions, was probably the fruit of the same extended policy which regulated all the designs of this extraordinary man. In a beautiful and fertile spot in the interior of Lybia, surrounded on all sides by immense deserts, stood the temple of Jupiter Ammon, whose oracle had the same authority and fame among the African and Asiatic nations that the temple of Delphos enjoyed in Greece. Alexander had always encouraged a popular superstitious belief, which he found eminently subservient to his schemes of ambition, that he owed his own birth to an intrigue of Jupiter with his mother Olympias. The wiser part of his subjects, no doubt, treated this fiction with the ridicule it deserved; but it seemed an object of moment to give it force and credit with the multitude, and in particular with the barbarous nations against whom his enterprises were directed. Nothing seemed so proper to this end as the voice of the Lybian oracle, the testimony of Jupiter himself, acknowledging the king for his genuine offspring. The difficulties of the enterprise, in conducting a great army through an hundred leagues of sandy desert, weighed nothing in the scale with such an object. He secretly procured every necessary information regarding his route, and even employed guides without the knowledge of his army, that he might appear solely conducted by the aid of heaven to the meritorious and pious object of his journey. Two dragons, according to Ptolemy, or two ravens, as Aristobulus related, were the sole directors of his course. The oracle was prudently instructed and prepared for his reception, and the enterprise (of course) ended to his wish, in a direct and solemn acknowledgment of his heavenly descent.

Returning from his African expedition, Alexander now traversed Assyria, and, passing the Tigris and Euphrates without opposition, came up with the Persian monarch at the head of 700,000 men, near to the village of Arbela. Before assembling this immense army, Darius had again earnestly solicited for peace. He offered to Alexander, along with his daughter, a still greater cession of territory, and the sum of 10,000 talents: but the ambition of the Macedonian was unbounded, and he rejected all terms but those of implicit submission. The Macedonian army did not exceed 40,000 men. It was towards the close of day when they came in sight of the prodigious host of the Persians, which extended over an immense plain to the utmost distance that the eye could reach. Even some of Alexander's bravest officers were appalled with this sight, and Parmenio counselled him, as his wisest plan, to attack them in the night, when the inequality of numbers

might be the less seen and felt on both sides. But Alexander, with more sagacity, conjectured that the Persians would prepare themselves against such an attack, and that it was a better policy to wait till the day-break, when they would find their enemy exhausted with the fatigue of watching during the night under arms, while his own troops, with proper attention to their necessary refreshment, would encounter them with vigor and alacrity.

The issue corresponded with this sagacious foresight. The attack was made at day-break with an ardor and impetuosity on the part of the Greeks, which, in the first onset, threw the foremost ranks of the Persian army back in confusion upon the main body, and completely restrained and rendered ineffectual its operations. Disorder, once begun, was propagated like an electrical shock through the whole mass, and the decisive victory at Arabela was purchased even with less effort than had attended the contest at Issus, or that on the banks of the Granicus. The numbers of the Persians that fell at Arbela are estimated by Arrian at 300,000, while the loss of the Macedonians did not exceed 1200.

Darius now fled from province to province, while the whole country submitted to the conqueror. In this situation, the ill-fated monarch, a fugitive, abandoned by his troops and closely pursued by Alexander, was finally betrayed by Bessus, one of his own satraps. He dismissed a body of Greeks who were his guards, and who, from personal attachment, followed him through all his disasters, lest the preference shown to foreign soldiers might offend his native subjects. In this deserted situation, he was surprised and assassinated by Bessus. Polystratus, a Macedonian, received his last words, which were an expression of gratitude to Alexander for the humane treatment he had bestowed on his mother, his wife, and his children. There is a chasm in the narrative of Quintus Curtius at that passage which relates the death of Darius, and it has been supplied by some one of his editors upon the authority of Plutarch. The inserted passage is singularly beautiful, and altogether worthy of the pen of an ancient classic. It informs us that Polystratus having gone aside to a fountain to quench his thirst, saw hard by a mean wagon, in which lay a wounded man, to appearance in the agonies of death. There was no attendant near. On approaching, he perceived that it was the king of the Persians, who lay stretched upon a skin, covered with wounds. When Polystratus came near, he opened his eyes, and feebly asked of him a draught of water, which when he had received, "Whoever thou art," said he, "who hast done me this office of humanity, it is the last of my misfortunes that I can offer thee no return. But Alexander will requite thee for it; and may the gods reward him for that generous compassion which, though an enemy, he has shown to me and to my unfortunate kindred. Take," said he, "this hand as the pledge of my gratitude." So saying, he grasped the hand of Polystratus, and immediately

expired.* Such was the end of Darius Codomannus: *Quid hujus conditione inconstantius aut mutabilius, qui nuper inter felices felicissimus, mox inter miseros nus vrimus!* Of this prince it may be truly said that he merited a better fate. The tender and humane affections formed a strong ingredient in his nature. When we consider him stripped of his dominions, his crown and life sacrificed to the insatiable ambition of an unprovoked invader—to forgive was much; but an emotion of gratitude to that enemy, expressed with his latest breath, indicated a generosity of soul which is scarcely to be paralleled.

Alexander was now master of the Persian empire. He passed from Babylon to Susa, and thence to Persepolis. But the immense riches, of which his army now made their spoil, corrupted and relaxed the military discipline. The Macedonians assumed the Asiatic manners; and Alexander himself gave way without restraint to every species of debauchery and intemperance. In the madness of intoxication, he set fire to the royal palace of Persepolis, at the instigation of the courtesan Thais, who boasted that a woman had better avenged the injuries the Persians had done the Greeks than all their generals. Many instances of the most unbounded vanity, and even of cruelty and ingratitude, disgraced the conqueror of the East. Without those fresh supplies of troops which from time to time arrived from Macedonia, the shameful corruption of manners which pervaded his army could not have failed to animate even those dissolute and indolent Asiatics to a recovery of their freedom by exterminating their invaders.

But ambition, the most powerful antidote against the contagion of luxury, was the darling passion of Alexander. Amidst all the enervating pleasures of Persepolis, the Macedonian was meditating new enterprises and more extensive conquests. The son of Jupiter could do nothing less than follow the footsteps of his brothers Hercules and Bacchus. He now projected the conquest of India, firmly persuaded that the gods had decreed him the sovereignty of the whole habitable world. The fame of his victories had preceded him in his course, and he penetrated without much opposition to the banks of the Indus, receiving in his progress the submission of most of the native princes, who deprecated his hostility, and sought to gain his favor by large subsidies and presents. One of these, however, named Porus, a prince of great spirit and magnanimity, disdained to submit to the invader, and maintained a contest for his independence which did equal honor to his personal courage and conduct as a general. Porus encountered the Macedonians with a large and well-disciplined army; but the event was unsuccessful, and in a decisive engagement on the banks of the Hydaspes, the Indians were defeated

* Q. Curtius, in fine, lib. v. c. 13.

with the loss of 20,000 foot and 3000 horse. The captive prince being brought into the presence of his conqueror, Alexander generously praised him for the courage and ability he had displayed, and concluded by asking him in what manner he wished and expected to be treated. "As a king," said Porus. Struck with the magnanimity of this answer, Alexander declared he should not be frustrated of his wishes; for from that moment he should regard him as a sovereign prince, and think himself honored by his friendship and alliance. As a proof of his amity, he added to the kingdom of Porus some of the adjoining provinces, from which he had expelled the princes who had been his ancient enemies.

The Macedonian, as the monuments of his Indian conquests, built two large cities, to one of which he gave the name of Nicæa, and to the other of Bucephalia; the latter in honor of his famous horse Bucephalus, who died there. He now advanced into the interior of India, passing the rivers Hypeasis and Acesine, eastern branches of the Indus; and his accustomed good fortune constantly attending him, he would have pursued his course to the Eastern Ocean, had the spirits of his army kept pace with his ambition. But those barbarous nations, though unable to resist his progress, were not subdued. It was impossible to retain the territory he had overrun; and his troops, foreseeing no end to their labors, positively refused to proceed. With a sensible mortification to his pride, he was forced to return to the Indus, after rearing, as monuments of his conquests, twelve altars upon the eastern banks of the Hyphasis, of enormous height, on which he inscribed his own name, with those of his father Ammon and his brothers Hercules and Apollo. He is said also to have traced a camp in the same place of three times the necessary extent, surrounding it with a strong rampart and fosse: and to have built in it enormous stables for horses, with the mangers of a most extraordinary height. He is, in like manner, said to have caused suits of armor to be buried in the earth, of size far exceeding the human proportions, with bedsteads, and all other utensils on a similar gigantic scale; follies which would, indeed, exceed all belief, did they not rest on the authority of authors, whose testimony appears hardly liable to suspicion.

Alexander now determined to turn his disappointment to the best avail by exploring the countries washed by the Indus in its course to the ocean. In this view a numerous armament of ships was partly built and partly collected on the different branches of that great river, and the command of it given to Nearchus, a native of Crete, a man of talents and genius, in whom Alexander found an able and enterprising coadjutor. On board of this fleet the king himself embarked, with a large part of his troops, while the rest followed by land along the course of the river; the fleet and army thus aiding each other's progress. In this expedition, which was of several months' duration, the Greeks encountered

considerable opposition from the warlike tribes of Indians through whose territories they forced their way.

Having at length reached the ocean, at the sight of which Alexander is reported to have shed tears, as finding here an impassable limit to his conquests, he directed Nearchus to proceed along the Indian shore to the Persian Gulf, which he determined to march with the army towards Persepolis and Babylon, through the desert plains of Gedrosia, and the more cultivated country of Caramania. Both plans were accomplished. Nearchus, after a voyage of seven months, arrived in the Euphrates, while Alexander, within the same time, amidst incredible fatigues and perils, and with the loss of three-fourths of his army, reached the frontier of Persia. On his arrival at Susa, where he was received with the honours due to the sovereign of the empire and the conqueror of the eastern world, he married Statira, the daughter of Darius, and at the same time celebrated the nuptials of eighty of his chief officers with a like number of Persian ladies of distinguished rank, on each of whom he bestowed a suitable dowry. The public joy, on occasion of these splendid festivals, was increased by the arrival of Nearchus at Susa, the report of his successful expedition, and the detail of those discoveries which were the fruit of his voyage.*

We have hitherto contemplated the character of Alexander chiefly in a favorable point of view. It must not, however, be disguised that this character, ingenuous upon the whole, and worthy of admiration, was stained and deformed by extraordinary vices and defects. Of his inordinate vanity we have already seen some striking proofs. Of his sanguinary disposition we have likewise had examples in the barbarous treatment of some of his vanquished enemies; but it remains to be told that, in the unbridled rage and frenzy of his passions, he was guilty of the most shocking cruelty, combined with ingratitude to some of his best friends. Philotas, a worthy favorite of Alexander, the only remaining son of his oldest and ablest general Parmenio, had received some vague information of a treasonable design against the life of Alexander, but delayed to mention it, probably from giving no credit

* The journal of Nearchus's voyage, preserved to us by Arrian, and found in his book upon Indian Affairs, from the twentieth to the forty-first chapter inclusively, is a most instructive and curious document. It has been translated and illustrated by an ample and learned commentary by Dr. Vincent. The accounts which we find in Arrian and in Strabo, of the state of manners and the condition of society in India at the time of Alexander's expedition, correspond with surprising accuracy to the present condition and manners of the native Hindoos. The singular division of the whole mass of the people into *castes*, distinguished by their occupations and modes of life, and separated from each other by impassable barriers, prevailed at that early period as at present; and the progress of science and knowledge in many of the useful and elegant arts gives every presumptive evidence of a state of civilization extending to the most remote antiquity.

to the informer. On the report reaching his ears from a different quarter, Alexander, who was told at the same time that Philotas had been informed of the design and refused to communicate it, immediately conceived the unworthy suspicion that his silence arose from his own concern in the conspiracy. On no other grounds Philotas was put to the torture, and, in the agony of pain, uttering something that bore the appearance of confessing his offence, which was nothing more than a venial piece of negligence, he was, by the command of Alexander, stoned to death. But this was not enough. The aged Parmenio, whom the king concluded to be either an accomplice in the crime of his son, or at least to be incapable of ever forgiving his punishment, was, by the same command, assassinated in his tent. Clitus, a general of great ability, and to whom Alexander owed his life in the battle of the Granicus, stood deservedly, on these accounts, in high favor and esteem with his sovereign, who particularly prized the ingenuous simplicity of his manners, and the honest freedom with which he was accustomed to utter his opinions or propose his counsels. Amidst the mirth of a banquet, while the sycophant courtiers, in extolling to the skies the achievements of their prince, were drawing a depreciating comparison between the merits of Philip and of his son, this brave Macedonian had, with honest indignation, reproved their meanness, and warmly supported the fame of his ancient master. Alexander, in a transport of rage, seized a javelin from one of the guards, and hurling it at the breast of Clitus, struck him dead upon the spot. The atrocity of the deed was instantly felt by the king, and, in the agony of remorse, he would have turned the weapon against his own bosom, had not the attendants forcibly prevented him. What can we think of the infamous servility of the attendant courtiers, who, to compose the troubled spirits of their sovereign, could pass a solemn decree that the murder of Clitus was a justifiable action?

Yet, with the most wonderful inconsistency of character, the same man whose vanity and arrogance could prompt to such outrageous and criminal excesses, appears to have been possessed of a moderation of mind that utterly disdained the gross flatteries with which his courtiers continually strove to corrupt him. While sailing down the Hydaspes, Aristobulus, a mean sycophant, who had composed a narration of the king's battles, was reading to him for his amusement the account of the Indian expedition, in which the writer had exaggerated in many circumstances palpably beyond the truth. Alexander seized the book, and threw it with indignation into the river, telling the author that he merited the same treatment, for having absurdly endeavored to magnify by fiction, those deeds which needed no embellishment to attract the admiration of mankind.

Arrived at Ecbatana, Alexander celebrated his entry into the

ancient capital of Media with magnificent games and festivals, in which every refinement of luxury was contrived that could flatter the senses or feed the voluptuous passions. Whole days and nights were consumed in riot and debauchery, in which the meanest soldier vied with his prince in the most unrestrained indulgence. Amidst these tumultuous pleasures, the death of Hephæstion, whom Alexander loved with sincere affection, threw him into a paroxysm of despair. He commanded the physicians who attended him to be put to death; he accused the gods as conspiring with them to deprive him of a life more dear to him than his own; he ordered a public mourning, and that the sacred fires should be extinguished through all Asia: an omen which both his friends and enemies regarded as of the blackest import.

The Chaldean priests of Babylon had appropriated to their own use the riches and revenue of the temple of Belus, which was the ornament of that city, and a great object of superstitious veneration. Alexander had expressed a purpose of reforming this abuse, and the Chaldeans, to avert his design, had published a prediction that his entry into Babylon would be fatal to the conqueror of the East. Alexander probably saw through this artifice and despised it. He entered Babylon in triumph, and was so delighted with the splendor of that great city, that he declared his purpose of making it the capital of his empire. He there received ambassadors from various regions of the earth, congratulating him on his conquests, and soliciting his friendship and alliance: but mark the force of superstition even in the greatest minds. The Chaldean prophecy, in spite of reason, depressed his spirits to such a degree as to force him to drown reflection by every species of riot and debauchery. The consequence was an intermittent fever, which, after a few days' continuance, put an end to his life, in the thirty-third year of his age.

It is not easy to form to ourselves a precise and just idea of the character of Alexander the Great. While some authors have attributed to him the most extensive as well as the soundest plans of policy, there are others who have rated him no higher than as a fortunate madman. Truth is generally to be found between opposite extremes. We cannot, consistently with reason, say, with M. Montesquieu, that that general trusted nothing to chance who, with an army of only thirty-five thousand men, the sum of seventy talents, and a single month's provisions, set out upon the conquest of Asia. Neither can we, with the same author, ascribe it to a sagacious policy that he assumed the Persian garb, imitated the manners of that people, affected all the ostentatious splendor of an Asiatic monarch, and corrupted the simple and virtuous habits of his Macedonian troops by every excess of luxury and debauchery. But if we cannot, in these particulars, join in the encomium bestowed on the profound policy of Alexander, much less can we subscribe to the opinion of the French satirist, that

the youth who, at the age of twenty-four, had, in three battles, won the empire of Persia; who was master of Greece, of Asia, and of Egypt; and who, in the course of a few years, built more cities than any other conqueror is recorded to have destroyed, merited no other treatment than to be confined as a madman.* A judgment of this kind may be allowed to pass in a satire of Boileau, but has no weight in the balance of sober reflection. Guided by a spirit of just criticism in the perusal of the history of this great man, of which we have here exhibited some general outlines, we shall discern the characteristics of a singular genius taking its direction from unbounded ambition: an excellent and ingenuous nature corrupted at length by an unvarying current of success; and a shocking example of the violence of the passions, when eminence of fortune removes all restraint, or flattery stimulates to their uncontrolled indulgence.

The extent of the views of Alexander, and the reach of his genius, may be estimated from those *few* schemes which he had entered in his table-book as enterprises which he still purposed to accomplish for establishing and securing the empire he had founded. These were, 1. That 1000 ships of war should be built in Phœnicia and Cyprus, for the conquest of the Carthaginian empire, and of all the states on the African and European coasts of the Mediterranean Sea. 2. That a high road should be made from Egypt along the African coast to the Pillars of Hercules, and garrisons and cities built along it at convenient stations:—a facility of communication between the distant parts of an empire so extended, he judged to be absolutely essential to its preservation. 3. That six magnificent temples should be built in various parts of the empire, to promote an amicable consonance in the great principles of religion, and reliance on the divine government; without which, as a fundamental persuasion, independent of all the various modes of worship, no empire can long exist or flourish. 4. That sea-ports, harbors, and arsenals, should be constructed in every convenient situation, for the reception and security of the fleets. 5. That all the new cities he had founded should be planted with colonies, and interchanges made by transporting the Asiatics into Europe and Africa, the Europeans and Africans into Asia. This, which tended to the union and consolidation of all the different parts of his empire, was the main end and centre of all the projects of this extraordinary man. His object, in short, was *universal empire*. Whether that object was practicable or attainable need not be inquired; it was so in his opinion, and all his designs and measures tended to that end. This object is the

* Heureux, si de son tems pour des bonnes raisons,
La Macedoine eut eu des petites maisons.
BOILEAU.

key to his whole conduct, and reconciles every apparent anomaly of his character: it accounts for his desire to be held of divine origin, while his mind had no tincture of credulity; for his gentle and conciliating manners opposed to the arrogance of his temper, impatient of control or opposition: for his generosity, clemency, and munificence; for his frantic resentment of every thing that tended to mortify his pride; for the assumption of the Eastern dress, and imitation of the Eastern manners, and the studied abolition of all distinctions between his native subjects, and the nations whom he subdued.

Alexander on his death-bed had appointed no successor, but had given his ring to Perdiccas, one of his officers, and his principal favorite after the death of Hephæstion. When his courtiers asked him to whom he wished the empire to devolve upon his death, he replied, *To the most worthy*; and he is said to have added, that he foresaw this bequest would prepare for him very extraordinary funeral rites. He left by Barsine, the widow of Memnon of Rhodes, a son named Hercules; he had a brother, Aridæus, a weak prince, whom he carried along with him in his expeditions; and his Queen Roxana, the daughter of Oxyartes, a Bactrian, was with child at his death. By Statira, the daughter of Darius Codomannus, he had no children, nor by Parisatis, the daughter of Ochus. His principal officers having held a council upon his death, it was agreed that the crown should be conferred on Aridæus, who took the name of Philip; and it was resolved that the child of Roxana, if a son, should share the empire with him. She was soon after delivered of a son, who was named Alexander, and whose right was accordingly acknowledged.

This settlement of the empire jointly upon a weak man and an infant was the result of the jealousy of the principal officers, who could not agree upon the choice of any one of themselves, while each thought he had an equal claim with his competitors. Those of the most moderate ambition would have been contented with the sovereignty of some of the provinces; while others aimed at an undivided empire. Among the latter was Perdiccas, who, from the circumstance of receiving the ring of Alexander, was considered as tutor of the princes, and as such had a share of the regency; but this ambitious man interpreted the king's gift as a designation of him for his successor.

His policy was singular; he brought about a division of the whole empire into thirty-three different governments, among the chief officers of Alexander; men of very different measure of abilities, and who he foresaw would be for ever at variance. His aid must, therefore, probably be courted, and he proposed by an artful management to weaken all, and thus reduce them by degrees under his own authority. In this division of the empire, the original monarchy of Macedon, with all the provinces gained by Philip, together with Greece, were allotted to Antipater and Craterus. Paphlagonia and

Cappadocia were assigned to Eumenes; Egypt to Ptolemy; and to Antigonus, Phrygia, Lycia, and Pamphylia. Lysimachus had Thrace with the adjacent countries upon the Euxine. To Perdiccas himself, no distinct share of the empire was assigned in government; he contented himself with his influence in the regency and the command of the household troops.

On the history of the successors of Alexander, the Abbé Condillar has made a very just reflection: "We are interested," says he "in the revolutions of the Grecian states; our admiration is excited by the conquests of Alexander: but we can scarcely fix our attention on the history of his successors. Yet a vast theatre is opened to our view — a variety of scenes and multiplied catastrophes. How then does it happen that the history of those transactions is less interesting than the life of Lacedæmon? It is not the magnitude of an object that renders it truly interesting. A large picture is often displeasing from the very circumstance of its greatness. We lose the connection of its parts, because the eye cannot take them in at once. Still less will a large picture give us pleasure, if every portion of it presents a different scene or action, each unconnected with the other." Such is the case with the history of the successors of Alexander. The multitude of subordinate governors who share and dismember this vast empire, every one of whom we behold pursuing separate schemes of ambition, throws a confusion upon the whole picture, which it requires the most laborious attention to dissipate; and even when that is accomplished, at the expense of much fatigue and trouble, the end to be gained, either in instruction or pleasure, is not adequate to the cost. In the revolutions of Greece, our views are continually fixed upon the most striking and interesting objects; the development of the human mind, in its advances from rudeness to refinement; the progress of government and legislation; the gradual changes of national manners; the exercise of the noblest passions, the love of country and of ingenuous freedom; the display of eminent virtues and great abilities. But in this motley and confused drama of the dismembered empire of Alexander, there is neither a people nor a country for whom our interest is excited: there is neither a display of talents nor of virtues. At the head of the empire we behold two sovereigns, the one a fool, the other an infant; an unprincipled and ambitious regent with no defined or legal authority; a multitude of inferior governors, each aiming at an extension of his own power by the overthrow of his rivals; and, finally, the consequence of their contentions and intrigues, in the extinction of all the family and kindred of Alexander.

There is, however, one exception to these barbarous and disgusting scenes. Among the numerous governors, Ptolemy, surnamed Soter, a Macedonian of mean extraction, had Egypt, as we have remarked, for his share of the empire. He owed his elevation to his merit, and had served as a general under Alexander

from the commencement of the Persian war. While he aimed at independence as a sovereign, he had too much good sense to embroil himself with the disputes of the other governors, but applied himself with earnestness and success to the establishment of his own authority, and the advancement of the happiness of his people. Perdiccas judged that he would find in Ptolemy the chief obstacle to his ambitious views, and he therefore turned his attention first to the reduction of Egypt. In this enterprise he had the authority of the kings, on the plausible pretext, that Ptolemy had revolted from their sovereignty, and made himself an independent monarch. But the attempt was unsuccessful; he found it impracticable to make impression on the Egyptian frontier, which Ptolemy defended with a powerful army; his troops, disgusted with the severe and haughty manner of their leader, and exasperated with their ill success, mutinied, and assassinated him: and transferred their services and allegiance to the governor of Egypt.

Ptolemy, whose reputation was enhanced by the defeat of this enterprise, might now have succeeded to the power and authority of Perdiccas, as regent, under Arridæus and the infant prince; but he wisely declined that dangerous dignity, which could add nothing to his real power: and, on his refusal, it fell to Antipater, the governor of Macedonia. A new division was now made of the empire; and Babylon and Assyria were assigned to Seleucus. But Egypt still remained under Ptolemy, who had established his authority in that quarter upon a solid basis.

Eumenes, the governor of Cappadocia, a man of great merit, and firmly attached to the family of Alexander, was, from those circumstances, regarded with a jealous eye by the rest of his colleagues. Antipater, in the quality of Regent, proclaimed war against him, and he was betrayed and delivered up to Antigonus, the governor of Phrygia and Lydia, who put him to death, and seized upon his states. Antigonus, thus acquiring the command of a great part of the Asiatic provinces, began to aspire to the universal empire of Asia. He attacked and ravaged the dominions of the contiguous governors. Seleucus, the governor of Babylon, unable to make head against him in the field, fled into Egypt, and humbly sought the aid and protection of Ptolemy; who, alarmed at the designs of Antigonus, supported the fugitive with a powerful army, and reinstated him in his government of Babylon.

Seleucus was beloved by his subjects, and the time of his return to Babylon became a common epoch through all the Asiatic nations. It is called the era of the *Seleucidæ*, and is fixed 312 years before the birth of Christ. It is made use of all over the East, by Jews, Christians, and Mahometans. The Jews call it the *era of contracts;* because, when subject to the Syro-Macedonian princes, they were obliged to employ it in all contracts and civil deeds. The Arabians term it the *era of the two-horned;* a denomination taken from the coins or medals of Seleucus, in

which he is represented with horns, like those of a ram. In the book of the Maccabees it is called the *era of the kingdom of the Greeks.*

Antigonus, however, persisted in his schemes of ambition. He sent his son, Demetrius, with a fleet against Ptolemy, which was victorious in an engagement with that of the Egyptians. It was on this occasion that Antigonus and Demetrius assumed to themselves the title of kings, in which they were imitated by all the other governors. A league was now formed against Antigonus and Demetrius, by Ptolemy and Seleucus, in which they were joined by Cassander, the son of Antipater, and Lysimachus; the former, governor of Macedonia, and the latter of Thrace. The battle of Ipsus, in Phrygia, decided the contest. Antigonus was killed, Demetrius fled with the shattered remains of his army, and the conquerors made a partition of their dominions. Ptolemy, in addition to Egypt and Lybia, had Arabia, Cœlosyria, and Palestine; and Cassander had Macedonia and Greece. The share of Lysimachus was Thrace, Bithynia, and some other provinces beyond the Hellespont. Seleucus had all the rest of Asia, to the river Indus. This last kingdom, the most powerful and splendid of the whole, was called the kingdom of Syria; of which the capital, Antioch, was built by Seleucus, and was the residence of the line of monarchs descended from him.

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## CHAPTER V.

Flourishing state of Egypt under the Ptolemies—Greece after the death of Alexander—Achæan league—Revolution at Lacedæmon—Ambitious designs of Philip II of Macedon draw on him the vengeance of the Romans—Their aid solicited by the Ætolians—Macedon conquered—Greece becomes a Roman province.

We have remarked, that under the first Ptolemy, surnamed Soter, the kingdom of Egypt was extremely flourishing. This prince, a true patriot and wise politician, considered the happiness of his people as the first object of government. A lover himself of the arts and sciences, they attained, during his reign, to a degree of splendor which rivalled their state in the most illuminated days of Greece. It is remarkable that Greece, which owed her first dawning of literature and the arts to the Egyptians, should

now contribute to polish and instruct her ancient masters. Ptolemy Soter founded the famous Library of Alexandria,* that immense treasury of literature, which, in the time of his son Ptolemy Philadelphus,† contained above 100,000 volumes. It was still enlarged by the succeeding monarchs of that same race, till it amounted, at length, as Strabo informs us, to 700,000 volumes; a collection quite prodigious, when we consider the comparative labor and expense of amassing books before the invention of printing, and since that era. This immense library was burnt to ashes in the war which Julius Cæsar waged with the inhabitants of Alexandria. Adjoining to this was a smaller library, which escaped the conflagration at that time, and which became, in the course of ages, very considerable, but, as it also had opposed the progress and continuance of Egyptian literature, the second library of Alexandria was burnt, about 800 years afterwards, when the Saracens took possession of Egypt. The books were taken out by order of the Caliph Omar, and used, for six months, in supplying the fires of the public baths. "If these books," said Omar, "contain nothing but what is in the Alcoran, they are of no use; if they contain any thing not in it, they are of no consequence to salvation; and if any thing contrary to it, they are damnable, and ought not to be suffered."

Ptolemy Philadelphus, the son of Soter, inherited the talents and many of the good qualities of his father, though stained with considerable blemishes: it was by the orders of this prince, who wished to understand the laws and the history of the Jews, and enrich his library with a copy of the Books of Moses, that that translation called the *Septuagint*, as being the work of seventy-two interpreters, was made from the Hebrew into Greek.‡ Egypt

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* Ptolemy Soter was, himself, a man of letters, and wrote a history of the wars of Alexander, which was greatly esteemed, but has not come down to posterity.

† He was so named, ironically, for having put two of his brothers to death, from a jealousy of their popularity with his subjects.

‡ These seventy-two interpreters are said to have been native Jews, six of the most learned men being chosen from each of the twelve tribes, and sent to Egypt by Eleazar, the high priest, at the request of Ptolemy, who had conciliated his good will, by releasing all the Jewish captives in Egypt. This account has been disputed upon no better ground than that a smaller number would have served the purpose as well as the larger.—See Prideaux. For four hundred years the Septuagint translation was held in such esteem by the Jews themselves, that it was read in many of the synagogues of Judea in preference to the original. But when they saw that the Christians esteemed it equally, they then became desirous of exploding its credit, and in the second century Aquila, an apostate Christian, was employed to make a new Greek version, in which he designedly perverted the sense of all the passages most directly applicable to our Saviour. Other translations were likewise made by Symmachus and Theodotion. The original version, by the carelessness of transcribers, also became very erroneous; so that, in the third century, Origen, in the view of forming a correct copy of the Scriptures, published first one edition in four columns (thence called the *Tetrapla*), containing the versions of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, along with the Hebrew text; and afterwards a second edition, called Hexapla, in which two

continued still to flourish under the succeeding prince, Ptolemy Euergetes, who attained the glorious surname (*the Beneficent*) from his successful promotion of the prosperity and happiness of his people. In the beginning of his reign, he waged war with Antiochus of Syria, for the recovery of part of the Asiatic provinces which belonged to his hereditary kingdom; and, being successful in that enterprise, he brought home immense spoils, among which were a great number of paintings and statues, with which he enriched his capital of Alexandria. On returning by Jerusalem, Josephus informs us that he offered sacrifice in the temple to the God of Israel, in thanksgiving for the victories he had gained over his enemies. It has been supposed that the Jews, to court his favor, showed to him the Prophecies of Daniel, in which his conquests appeared to be predicted. The Alexandrian library owed a great increase of its literary treasures to this prince.

The descendants of the first Ptolemy continued to fill the throne of Egypt for two hundred and ninety-two years. In the three first of these reigns the Egyptians were probably a greater, and certainly a much happier people, than they had ever been in those remote periods which historians have mentioned with poetical exaggeration.

In the preceding brief notices of the monarchies which rose from the ruins of the empire of Alexander, we have anticipated somewhat in the order of time. We must now recall our attention to the affairs of Greece posterior to the death of that monarch; and we shall very shortly trace the outlines of her history, till she becomes a province of the now extended empire; a melancholy period, enlivened by few of those scenes or events which either animate the feelings or engage the imagination.

During the period of the conquests of Alexander, the Grecian republics remained for the most part in a state of torpid inactivity. One feeble effort for their emancipation from the Macedonian yoke was made in Peloponnesus, by the Spartans, which was speedily repressed by Antipater, who, in one battle, put an end to all resistance. Some years after, while Alexander was on his expedition to India, Harpalus, whom he had appointed governor of Babylon, having amassed, by tyranny and extortion, the immense sum of five thousand talents, apprehensive that the conqueror, on his return, would bring him to a severe reckoning, passed over into

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other versions, the one found at Nicopolis, the other at Jericho, were added to the former. From a comparison of all these translations, Origen laudably endeavored to settle the text of a genuine and complete translation of the Scriptures. The best modern edition of the Septuagint is that of Dr. Grabe, published in the beginning of the eighteenth century. The Septuagint translation was in use in the time of our Saviour, and is that out of which most of the citations in the New Testament from the Old are taken. It was likewise the canonical translation used by all the Christian churches from the earliest ages.

Greece, where he employed his money in corrupting the orators of Athens and the chief men of that republic, in the view of establishing an independent power under his own authority and control. But he found, in the incorruptible virtue of Phocion, an insuperable obstacle to his designs. This venerable man acted on the same unshaken principles he had all along maintained; he could not consider Alexander as lawfully the master or sovereign of Greece; but he saw with regret that the era of Grecian liberty had long passed away, along with the virtuous manners of former times, and that a people thoroughly corrupted and degenerate were incapable of recovering their lost freedom, or maintaining it, though gained for a season. He wished, therefore, to preserve at least the peace and tranquillity of his country. But if we judge thus of the policy of Phocion, we cannot impute it for blame to his great rival, Demosthenes, that he cherished different views; and that as he had constantly opposed the ambitious designs of Philip, so he persevered in denying the sovereignty of Alexander. The enemies of Demosthenes attempted to bring his integrity under suspicion, by propagating a slanderous report, that he had accepted bribes from Harpalus, and entered into the views of that ambitious and bad man. But this accusation, which gained such credit at the time as to procure the banishment of Demosthenes, has, upon the most scrupulous inquiry, being deemed a calumny. The principal agent of Harpalus being put to the torture, to force a confession of the names of those Athenians who had accepted bribes from that traitor, solemnly acquitted Demosthenes of that dishonorable charge. A single hint from Alexander of his intention to revisit Greece, was sufficient to defeat the schemes of Harpalus, and to procure his expulsion from Athens.

On intelligence of Alexander's death, a wonderful change was operated on the public mind in Greece. Liberty was now the universal cry. The people of Athens expressed the most tumultuous joy, and the Ecclesia resounded with the harangues of the orators and shouts of the applauding populace. Demosthenes, though in exile, engaged several of the states to join with the Athenians, and to equip a fleet of two hundred and forty galleys. The Spartans, dispirited by their late defeat by the arms of Antipater, refused to join the league for independence. Phocion, ever prudent and circumspect, advised the confederate states to wait the opportunity of those dissensions which he foresaw must infallibly arise among the different governors. But the counsel of Demosthenes, who proposed an immediate commencement of hostilities, suited better with the ardor of their present feelings. The advice of Phocion was justified by the event. Antipater, after some severe checks from the troops of the confederate states, finally defeated them, and reduced all to submission. In punishment of the offence of Athens, he abolished the democratic government, and established in its room an aristocracy, of which he

had the absolute control. He compelled the Athenians to defray the whole expenses of the war; and, finally, demanded that they should deliver up to him Demosthenes. This illustrious man, foreseeing inevitable death, swallowed poison.

Of the tendency of the political counsels of Demosthenes, in contrast with those of Phocion, I have already expressed a general opinion. The principle which prompted the counsels of the former was certainly noble. His views were unquestionably disinterested, for he supported the cause even of decaying and hopeless liberty against successful ambition, and, amidst every attempt to seduce him from his principles, he remained to the last the avowed enemy of the enslavers of his country. The question of preference between his politics and those of Phocion comes to this short issue: whether was it most advisable for the Greeks, corrupted and degenerate as they were, to submit peaceably to that servitude which they could not avoid, and patiently to bear the yoke which they had not strength to break; or, by continual resistance, to mark, at least, a desire of their ancient freedom—an indignant spirit, which rose against their situation; and thus to give a testimony to their tyrant, that, though oppressed, they were not subdued; though compelled to submit, they were not tame and voluntary slaves. The former was, perhaps, the more prudent and the safer part; the latter, without doubt, the more honorable.

The Athenians themselves, after the death of Demosthenes, gave an ample expression of their sense of his patriotic merits, as well as of the generosity of his counsels; for it was their character, as we have seen, oftener to expiate their offences to the dead, than to do justice to the living. They erected a statue in the Prytaneum to his memory, with this inscription:—"*If thy power, O Demosthenes, had been equal to thy wisdom and abilities, the Macedonian Mars had never ruled in Greece.*" *

We have already remarked those dissensions which, after the death of Alexander, arose among the governors of the different provinces, upon the first division of the empire made by Perdiccas. The new partition made by Antipater, on his acquiring the regency, gave rise to fresh disputes, and all were soon in arms and commotion. This was certainly the crisis that the Greeks should have awaited for throwing off the Macedonian yoke; but, too impatient and eager to seize the first opening that promised success to their design, their country became the theatre of war, affected by all the revolutions of the empire, and successively the prey of every ambitious governor whose power happened to predominate. Antipater, in making a new division of the provinces, was actuated by the twofold view of strengthening his own authority and weaken-

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* Εἰπερ ἴσην ῥώμην γνώμῃ Δημόσθενες, εἶχες,
Οὔποτ' ἂν Ἑλλήνων ἦρξεν Ἄρης Μακεδών.

ing that of his rivals, whose firm establishment in their governments had elevated them to the rank, and caused the greater part of them to assume the title, of *kings*. His policy was therefore judicious, but death put a period to his projects. He bequeathed Macedonia and the government of Greece to Polysperchon, one of Alexander's oldest officers, in preference to his own son Cassander, who, considering this as an act of injustice, prepared to assert his hereditary right by arms. He applied, in that view, to Antigonus, and received from him the aid of a large army, which, under the command of Nicanor, invaded Greece, and, attacking the city of Athens, seized the Piræus, and put a garrison into the citadel. Polysperchon, however, retained the Athenians in allegiance to his authority, by promising them the restitution of their democratic government, in place of the aristocracy established by Antipater. The revolution was accomplished; the partisans of the former government were condemned to death, and among these the old and venerable Phocion. Ever a friend to the tranquillity of his country, he had favored the party of the aristocracy, and had on that account incurred the popular resentment, which was now extreme, against all whom they regarded as enemies to democracy. Phocion, at the age of eighty, was condemned to drink hemlock. The last request he made to his son was, that he should endeavor to forget the injustice and ingratitude which the Athenians had shown to his father.

Meantime Cassander arrived with an army to the aid of Nicanor, and to support his own claims to Macedonia and Greece. Their united forces drove Polysperchon out of Attica, and forced him to retreat to Peloponnesus. Cassander subdued the Athenians, overturned the newly established democracy, and obliged the party of the nobles to elect one of their own number to preside as a governor under his control. They chose Demetrius Phalereus, a descendant of Conon, and a man of distinguished virtue and ability. Under his administration, which was of ten years' continuance, the Athenians were truly happy. The revenues of the state were increased, the useful arts encouraged, the strictest attention paid to the administration of justice, and to the reformation of all those abuses which had arisen from their late disorders and fluctuations of government. In short, this fickle people might have enjoyed real prosperity, had they possessed a true feeling of their real interests, and known how to value the blessings of peace and good order. But this was not their character; every change was acceptable to the Athenians. They idolized their present governor, Demetrius, and erected three hundred statues to his honor. We shall presently see the emptiness of these testimonies of popular favor.

Under the regency of Polysperchon, there was an utter extinction of the family of Alexander the Great. His mother, Olympias, had retired into Epirus during the regency of Antipater; but she

was invited by Polysperchon to return to Macedonia. Scarcely was she settled there, when her ambition and cruelty projected and accomplished the death of the weak Aridæus, the nominal successor to the empire of his brother Alexander, as well as of his queen Eurydice. By these abominable measures, she took on herself the administration of government, as the guardian of her infant grandson, the son of Alexander by Roxana. She had likewise put to death the brother of Cassander, and some principal men among the Macedonians, who had shown themselves hostile to her designs. On the plausible pretence of avenging those crimes, but in reality to serve his own ambitious ends, Cassander besieged her in the town of Pydna, and, taking the place by assault, Olympias became his prisoner, and was soon after put to death by his orders.

This great bar to his ambition being removed, Cassander kept the young prince and his mother, Roxana, in close confinement in the city of Amphipolis. But the Macedonians expressing their impatience till their native sovereign should assume the reins of government, Cassander caused both him and his mother to be privately murdered. The people expressed their resentment in murmurs; but such was the power of the usurper, that none dared openly to impeach or question his proceedings. Meantime Polysperchon, whom he had expelled from Macedonia, and who now governed in Peloponnesus, sent for Hercules, a younger son of Alexander by Barsine, from Pergamus, declaring his resolution to present him to the Macedonians, and cause his title to be acknowledged as their lawful sovereign. This new obstacle was removed by Cassander, who artfully won Polysperchon to his interest by confirming him in the government of Peloponnesus. The main condition of their treaty was, that the young Hercules and his mother should both be put to death.

There were now remaining of the family of Alexander only two sisters; Cleopatra, the widow of Alexander, king of Epirus; and Thessalonice, the wife of Cassander. Cleopatra, who had for some time resided at Sardis, in Lydia, seeing herself treated with little respect by Antigonus, the governor of that province, had betaken herself to Egypt, on the invitation of Ptolemy Soter; but she was brought back by order of Antigonus, and privately put to death. Thessalonice was afterwards murdered by one of her own sons, the second Antipater, in revenge for her having favored the claims of his brother to the succession of his paternal dominions. Thus within the compass of twenty-eight years from the death of Alexander the Great, there remained not one alive of all his family or kindred.

Antigonus, whose extensive projects we have already noticed, was perhaps the most ambitious of all those governors who shared the empire of Alexander. Not satisfied with almost the whole of the Asiatic provinces, his object was now the sovereignty of

Greece; and in that view he sent thither his son Demetrius Poliorcetes, a young man of great talents, and perfectly disposed to cooperate in all his schemes of ambition. With the command of a large army he made an attack on the Athenian territory, seized the Piræus without opposition, expelled the garrison of Demetrius Phalereus, and brought over the populace to his interest, by restoring the democratic constitution. The Athenians, happy as they had been under the government of Phalereus, could not resist the charms of revolution. The three hundred statues, which, in proof of their gratitude, they had erected to his honor, were thrown down and demolished: he was expelled the territory of the republic, and his rival Poliorcetes hailed the deliverer of Athens. The excellent Phalereus found an asylum at the court of Ptolemy Soter, in Egypt.

The life of Demetrius Poliorcetes was a perpetual series of reverses of fortune. During an interval of his absence from Athens, the city was seized by Cassander. Poliorcetes flying to its relief, rescued Attica from its invader; and the people, in the fervor of their zeal, proposed, as the highest rank of honor, to lodge their deliverer in the temple of their tutelary goddess, Minerva. After the battle of Ipsus, in which, as we formerly observed, his father Antigonus was killed, this same Poliorcetes, twice hailed the deliverer of Athens, was refused an asylum in that city when he fled thither for protection. When a change of fortune had secured the safety of his paternal dominions in Asia, he determined to avenge himself of the ungrateful Athenians. He landed in Attica with a numerous army, blocked up the harbor at the same time with his fleet, and after a long and vigorous siege, compelled the Athenians to surrender and throw themselves upon his mercy. He forgave them all past offences, and became once more their idol. Meantime a league was formed between Lysimachus, Seleucus, and Ptolemy, who divided Asia between them, and Poliorcetes was stripped of all his eastern territories. Thus reduced to the possession only of a few of the cities of Greece, he was on the point of losing even these, when the dissensions between the children of Cassander put him in possession of the crown of Macedonia. He was chosen to mediate in their differences; he found means to rid himself of the competitors, and seized the crown for himself. But destined as it would seem to a perpetual vicissitude of fortune, his new subjects of Macedonia, dissatisfied with the government of a sovereign who had no just claims to their allegiance, rebelled, and, deserting his standard, threw themselves under the rule of Pyrrhus, king of Epirus. Poliorcetes fled into Asia, where, after a variety of events of little importance to the chain of history, he surrendered himself a prisoner to Seleucus, at whose court, dispirited and careless of life, he abandoned himself to excessive debauchery, and soon after died.

Such was the fate of the successors of Alexander, and such the catastrophe of his family; and thus feeble and fluctuating were most of those monarchies which were raised from the ruins of his empire. Great in extent of territory, they had no internal strength, nor any principle of union or durability. It was their lot to be governed by restless, jealous, and ambitious men; the perpetual jarring of whose interests gave them no intervals of tranquillity, nor allowed any attention to the settlement of their kingdoms, or the regulation of their domestic policy. These monarchies were, therefore, subject to perpetual revolutions; but all being alike deficient in that native strength which arises from a long-established government, there was not in any individual power a sufficiency of vigor to overwhelm or subjugate the rest. The general weakness of those kingdoms thus secured them against their incorporation and subjection to the government of any one of those ambitious rulers; while it paved the way for an easy conquest, and successive reduction of the whole under the yoke of a foreign power.

In that period from the death of Alexander the Great, which we have thus hastily run over, the proper history of the states of Greece presents only a series of unimportant revolutions; frequent and violent transitions from one form of government to another; political changes, not produced as formerly by the internal spirit or genius of the different commonwealths—or by those animated contentions which gave room for the display of the noble and manly passions—but effected at once by the will of a despot on a submissive, spiritless, and corrupted people. Yet, amidst this general weakness and degeneracy, there existed in a corner of this country a small people till now scarcely known, who still retained their ancient manners, and who preserved in a considerable degree the ardor of true patriotism and the love of their ancient liberty. These were the states of Achaia.

In those early times when all the cities of Greece, as if by general consent, shook off the yoke of their domestic tyrants, the cities of Achaia, Patræ, Dymæ, Tritæa, Pharæ, Ægium, and some others, had armed for their common liberty, and having deposed or expelled their governors, formed a league of association on a basis of perfect equality. It was agreed that each of the cities should be ruled by its own laws and magistrates; and that all affairs regarding their common interests should be treated in a senate, which should assemble twice in the year at Ægium, to which convention each of the associated states should send their deputies. No treaty could be formed, no alliance made, no war undertaken, or peace concluded, without the consent of the whole body. Two presidents of the assembly were yearly elected, called Στρατηγοί, or prætors. It was their duty to summon the states, and in them the authority of the body was vested during the intervals when it was not assembled. Such was the small but respectable republic of Achaia.

Till the era of the division of Alexander's empire, the Achaians had taken no share in the revolutions of Greece, having no ambition of extending their own territory or power, and no wealth to tempt the ambition of other states. They were enslaved, however, after that era by some of those imbolent governors, and several of their cities were garrisoned by Polysperchon, Demetrius Poliorcetes Cassander, and Antigonus Gonatus. Others suffered from the usurpation of domestic tyrants, and the ancient association seemed entirely at an end. The following circumstance, however, incited the states to a renewal of their league. The people of Ætolia, a set of lawless freebooters, emboldened by the disorders of Greece, began to make excursions in Peloponnesus. The territories of the Achaian states, lying immediately opposite to them, were most exposed to their ravages. On this occasion Dymæ, Patræ, Pharæ, and Tritæa, renewed their league of association on its ancient principles, and they were joined soon after by the Tegeans, and some of the other states of Peloponnesus. In one respect they improved on their former constitution, by electing only one president, or prætor, instead of two, and they were fortunate in choosing for that office a man truly deserving of it.

Aratus of Sicyon, when a youth of twenty years of age, had acquired a high reputation by delivering his native state from a domestic *tyranny*, and joining it to the associated republics. This young man was a singular phenomenon in those days of degeneracy. He possessed uncommon endowments of mind, and a heart which glowed with the love of honor and of his country. He was vigilant, enterprising, and prompt in decision; and he possessed that ready and forcible eloquence which is of the greatest importance to the magistrate of a democracy. Aratus was in the twenty-eighth year of his age when he was elected prætor of Achaia; and, invested with that honorable office, he formed the patriotic design of delivering Peloponnesus from the yoke of Macedonia. In the first year of his magistracy, he expelled the Macedonian garrison from Corinth; a most important measure, which gave the united states the command of the isthmus and entry to Peloponnesus. The consequence of this success was that the states of Megara, Troezene, and Epidaurus joined the Achaian confederacy.

The republic of Achaia was not fitted to support an offensive war, for two strong reasons. A number of separate, independent republics, however connected by a common interest, cannot always act with a perfect unanimity, and their measures are consequently seldom attended with that celerity of execution on which success so much depends. Moreover, the confederate states were neither populous nor wealthy, and, of course, they could not muster a strong force in the field. Aratus was quite sensible of these defects, and therefore bent his chief attention to the securing his country from attack, and from the necessity of going to war; and this he wisely judged would be best effected by strengthening

the league with the accession of some of the more powerful states of Greece.

In that view he made his proposals both to Athens and Lacedæmon; but these commonwealths, though still affecting a passion for liberty, could not, from a despicable pride, brook the thought of owing their freedom to the petty states of Achaia. The situation of the Lacedæmonians at this time was indeed such as to engross all attention to their domestic concerns, as that republic was actually in the very crisis of a revolution.

Agis IV. had succeeded to one branch of the throne of Sparta a short time before Aratus was chosen prætor of the Achaian states. This prince, a better man than a wise politician, had cherished the chimerical project of restoring the ancient laws of Lycurgus, as conceiving this the only means of restoring his country from the disorders induced by the universal corruption of its manners. But there is a period when political infirmity has attained such a pitch that recovery is impossible; and Sparta had arrived at that period. The design of Agis, of course, embraced the radical reform of a new division of all the land of the republic—a project sufficient to rouse the indignation and secure the mortal enmity of the whole of the higher class of citizens, and of almost every man of weight and consideration in his country. The plan was therefore to be conducted with the greatest caution and secrecy till sufficiently ripened for execution; but Agis was betrayed by his own confidants. Leonidas, his colleague in the sovereignty, had imbibed a relish for luxury from his Asiatic education at the court of Seleucus, and was thus easily persuaded to take the part of the richest citizens in opposing this violent revolution, which threatened to reduce all ranks of men to a level of equality. The premature discovery of his scheme was fatal to its virtuous author; for the party of his opponents was so formidable, that after compelling Agis to take shelter in the Temple of Minerva, they seized the opportunity of his going to the bath, and dragged him to the common prison, where a tribunal of the Ephori, summoned by his colleague Leonidas, sat ready to judge him as a state criminal. He was asked, by whose evil counsel he had been prompted to disturb the laws and government of his country? "I needed none to prompt me," said the king, "to act as I thought right. My design was to restore your ancient laws, and to govern according to the plan of the excellent Lycurgus; and though I see my death is inevitable, I do not repent of my design." The judges hereupon pronounced sentence of death, and the virtuous Agis was carried forth from their presence and immediately strangled.

This example did not deter Cleomenes, the son of Leonidas, and his successor in one branch of the sovereignty, from cherishing the same patriotic design which had proved fatal to Agis, and which his own father had so keenly opposed. Cleomenes proposed the twofold object of delivering Sparta from the Macedonian

yoke and of restoring the ancient system of Lycurgus. He began by the judicious measure of attaching the army to his interest, securing the confidence and allegiance of all the principal officers, and dexterously removing from command such as he judged to be unfriendly to the revolutionary design. Several of the richer citizens, and even some of the Ephori, from whom he expected opposition, were on various pretences banished or put to death. Trusting to the ready co-operation of the lower orders, he then assembled the people, and detailing the great benefits to be expected from a complete change of system, proclaimed the abolition of all the debts, and beginning by investing himself of the whole of his property, made a new partition of the lands of the republic, and restored the ancient plan of education, the institution of the public tables, and, in a word, as nearly as possible, the long-forgotten regimen of Lycurgus. Cleomenes was hailed the second founder and father of his country, and Greece resounded with his praise, and boundless applause and admiration of the regenerated Lacedæmonians.

This revolution, which in reality was favorable to the great object of the Achæan league, the subversion of the Macedonian influence in Greece, did not, however, meet with that cordial approbation which it ought to have found from the states of Achaia. Instead of being the leaders in the great and patriotic design of vindicating the national liberty, they now feared that Sparta was destined to eclipse their glory by assuming that honorable pre-eminence. Such was the influence of pride and jealousy, that even the virtuous Aratus now affected to consider Cleomenes and the Spartans as cherishing views more hostile to the liberty and independence of the Grecian republics, by elevating the hated power of Lacedæmon, than even the control of the Macedonians. The consequence was that, with a policy which it is not easy to justify upon any principle of disinterested patriotism, Aratus and the Achaians now formed a strict alliance with Macedon to oppose, as they pretended, the ambitious design of the Spartans to be the rulers of Greece.

Antigonus Doson at this time governed Macedonia, in the minority of his nephew Philip, the son of Demetrius. He gladly entered into the designs of Aratus, which he naturally thought were most effectually subservient to the Macedonian interests; and entering Peloponnesus with a large army, attacked the Spartans under Cleomenes, and in one sanguinary battle left above 5000 dead on the field. Cleomenes, seeing all was lost, fled for shelter to Egypt. Sparta fell into the hands of the conqueror, and its newly regenerated constitution, with its short-lived freedom, were now annihilated for ever. Antigonus imposed upon the Lacedæmonians an easy yoke. Satisfied with an acknowledgment of their submission to the control of Macedon, he allowed them to model their laws and constitution as they should judge

best, and to elect their own magistrates. It may be believed they made no further attempt to revive the system of Lycurgus.

Antigonus died soon after, and was succeeded in the kingdom of Macedon by his nephew Philip, then a youth of seventeen years of age, endowed by nature with excellent talents and many valuable qualities of a sovereign. He was brave, eloquent, and of great address in moulding men to his purposes, which were not always the designs of a man of virtue and probity. Philip owed much to his uncle's care of his education and the early instruction he received in the science of government: he possessed great ambition, and was not scrupulous in the means of indulging it. His object very early appeared to be the dominion of all Greece: and the want of a bond of union among its states, and their eternal jealousies and quarrels, gave him every advantage. His ambition, however, and a train of success in the beginning of his career, inspired him with a confidence in his own plans, which in the end proved his destruction and the ruin of his own kingdom. After some considerable successes against the Ætolians, which gave him a high character as a general, the important contest at that time carrying on between the Romans and the Carthaginians appeared to offer to Philip, by the medium of a junction with Hannibal, the means not only of subjugating Greece, but of sharing in the spoils of Italy. Seduced by these flattering prospects, Philip concluded a treaty with Hannibal, by which he agreed to furnish a large fleet and army for the conquest of Italy; in return for which service, Hannibal agreed, after subduing the Romans, to invade Epirus and reduce it under the dominion of Macedon. This treaty was carried so far into effect by a large fleet under Philip, which entered the Ionian Gulf and seized the seaport of Oricum; but a fatal defeat ensued, and the armament of Philip returned with dishonor and mortification to his own ports.

The period was now come when the Romans first obtained a footing in Greece. This devoted nation was now prepared for slavery, and its destiny could not be averted. Philip, mortified by his late disaster, now bent his whole thoughts on the sovereignty of Greece. He was in league with the Achaian states; but the virtues of Aratus were an insurmountable bar to his ambition; it was therefore necessary that this obstacle should be removed, and the Macedonian was not scrupulous in his choice of means. He procured the death both of Aratus and of his son by poison, and in their extinction the last feeble prop of the Grecian liberty was cut away. Philip had now the command of the Achaian league, and seemed fast advancing to the attainment of his great object; but in provoking the enmity of the Romans, he had imprudently paved the way for his own destruction. Having renewed his attacks upon the Ætolians, this people, with a very natural but most imprudent policy, courted aid from the Romans, who cheerfully complied with a request which was to avenge their

own quarrel and gratify their passion of conquest. They declared themselves protectors of the liberties of Greece, which they were determined to defend against invasion from any other quarter than their own. Flaminius being sent with a large army into that country, defeated Philip in a decisive engagement at Cynoscephalæ, and speedily compelled him to sue for peace upon these humiliating terms, that all the Greek cities, both in Europe and Asia, should be declared free and independent of Macedonia; that every Greek or Roman captive should be set at liberty; that he should surrender to the Romans the whole of his armed ships of war, with the exception of five small vessels, and pay the sum of 1000 talents; and, finally, that his son Demetrius should be given up to the Romans as a hostage for security of the performance of these conditions. Such was the infatuation of the degenerate Greeks, that this treaty, which distinctly proclaimed their subjection to a foreign power upon a more formidable than Macedonia, and now rapidly advancing to universal dominion, was hailed by them as a new epoch of liberty.

The treaty of Cynoscephalæ in reality put a period to the kingdom of Macedon. Philip sunk into absolute insignificance. Seduced by false information from his youngest son Perseus, he caused Demetrius, his elder son, to be put to death. He died himself soon after; and Perseus, defeated in the battle of Pydna by the consul Æmilius, was compelled to surrender himself with all his family into the hands of the victor. Precipitated from the throne, this unhappy prince attended in chains the triumphal chariot of Æmilius, and died a prisoner in Italy. Thus ended the kingdom of Macedonia, which now became a Roman province, under the government of a proconsul.

The Romans, from the period of the conquest of the Macedonian kingdom, made rapid advances to the dominion of all Greece. In this progress their art was more conspicuous than their virtue. They gained their end by fostering dissensions between the republics; offering themselves as arbiters of differences, which they contrived should always terminate in their own favor, and bringing over by corruption the principal men of the different states to their interest. While they were confessedly the most powerful nation on earth, they employed that species of policy which is excusable only in the weak. A procedure of this kind is not fitted to command the reverence of a generous enemy. The Achaian states held that policy in contempt, and they did not scruple to insult the deputies of imperial Rome. This drew upon them the thunder of the Roman arms. Metellus marched into Greece with his legions, gave them battle, and entirely defeated them. Mummius, the consul, terminated the work, and made an easy conquest of the whole of Greece, which from that time became a Roman province, under the name of Achaia.

Athens alone had offered no resistance, and therefore could not

be said to be as yet subdued. This venerable republic had always flattered the predominant power, and thence had preserved a bastard species of liberty much akin to servitude. The Romans assisted the Athenians in a war against the Acarnanians, but Athens unwisely deprived herself of this alliance by concluding a treaty with an enemy of the Romans, Mithridates, king of Pontus. Aristion was the adviser of this imprudent measure, and Mithridates rewarded his services by raising him to the tyranny of Athens; an elevation which was dearly purchased, for Sylla besieged and took the city of Athens, delivered it for a day to the fury and plunder of his troops, and put Aristion to death. From that period, the Athenians quietly submitted to the dominion of Rome. They were allowed to retain their form of a democracy, which was now more quietly administered since their liberty was extinct, and there was no object to rouse the passions or inflame the turbulent spirit of the populace.

The Romans treated Greece with more peculiar favor and distinction than any other of the conquered provinces of the empire. The ancient habit of associating with that people the idea of all that in past ages was respectable in virtue or in valor, and more recently the idea of a singular eminence in philosophy, and the culture of the fine arts, had assuredly great weight in maintaining this favorable opinion of a degenerate and fallen people. Low as they had sunk in the scale of true greatness, the Greeks were yet in some respects superior to their conquerors. Rome was arrived at that period when the severer virtues which distinguished the first ages of the commonwealth had yielded to that refinement which arises from, and in its turn cherishes, the cultivation of letters and the taste for the fine arts. In these respects, Greece was to Rome an instructer and a model.

> Græcia capta ferum victorem cepit, et artes
> Intulit agresti Latio.—*Hor. Ep. ad Aug.*

Hence she was still regarded in an honorable point of view by her conquerors,—a consideration which leads us, at this period of the termination of the history of Greece, to take a short view of the national character and attainments in those departments of art and science in which the Greeks still continued to make a distinguished figure among the contemporary nations. Previously, however, to these considerations, the preceding sketch of the history of Greece furnishes naturally some political reflections which shall be the subject of the next chapter.

# CHAPTER VI.

Political reflections arising from the history of Greece—Retrospective view—Constitutional defects in the leading republics—A pure democracy is a chimera—All government essentially of the nature of a monarchy—Error of Montesquieu's theory—Ferguson's idea of a perfect republic—Democracy unfavorable to patriotism—Danger of generalizing in politics—A rude state of society favorable to patriotism—Greece a strong instance of this—Character of Greece after the Roman conquest.

We have now traced Greece from her origin; from the rude and barbarous periods when she owed even the most necessary arts of life to foreign instructors, through every stage of her progress to the highest rank among the civilized nations of the earth. We have seen the foundation and rise of her independent states; the vigorous perseverance by which they succeeded in shaking off the yoke of intolerable tyranny, and establishing a popular system of government; the alternate differences of these states from petty quarrels, the fruit of ambition and the love of power; while, at the same time they cordially united their strength and resources to oppose foreign hostilities, when such were formidable enough to threaten their liberties as a nation. We have remarked the domestic disorders which sprang from the abuse of that freedom which these republics enjoyed; and, finally, that general corruption of manners which, tainting all the springs of public virtue, and annihilating patriotism, at length brought this illustrious nation entirely under subjection to a foreign yoke. The revolutions which in this progress the states of Greece underwent, and the situations into which they were thrown by their alternate connection and differences, as well as by their wars with foreign powers, were so various, that their history is a school of instruction in politics, as there is scarce a doctrine in that important science which may not find an example or an illustration from their history.

The science of politics, like every other subject of philosophical speculation, admits of a variety of opposite and contradictory opinions—a truth the more to be lamented that of all sciences it is that, where for the interest of mankind it were most to be wished that our reasonings should rest upon solid and fixed principles. If, however, there is in reality any criterion of the solidity of abstract principles in political reasoning, it must be when we ascertain their coincidence or disagreement with actual experience in the history of nations. I shall adopt this criterion in laying before my readers a few reflections which naturally arise from the foregoing short delineation of the Grecian history.

The miserable oppression which, according to all accounts of the ancient historians, the states of Greece sustained under their first governors, a set of tyrants, who owed their elevation to violence, and whose rule was subject to no control from existing laws or constitutional restraints, was assuredly a most justifiable motive on the part of the people for emancipating themselves from that state of servitude, and for abolishing entirely that worst of governments—a pure despotism. It is therefore with pleasure we remark, in the early history of this nation, the noble exertion by which those states shook off the yoke of their tyrants, and established for themselves a new system of government on the just and rational basis of an equality of rights and privileges in all the members of the commonwealth. We admit, without scruple, the belief that those new republics were framed by their virtuous legislators in the true spirit of patriotism. But the intentions of the legislator are no test of the actual merits of the institutions themselves: and it is certain that those boasted republics were very far from exhibiting in practice that perfect system of political freedom which was expected from them in theory. We seek in vain either in the history of Athens or of Lacedæmon, for the beautiful idea on which speculative writers have exercised their fancy of a well-ordered commonwealth.

In treating formerly of the peculiar constitution of those two great and leading states, we endeavored to point out such circumstances as appeared to be defects in the constitution of those political fabrics. In the republic of Sparta, Lycurgus, by exterminating luxury, by the equal partition of the lands, and by banishing every motive to the ambition of individuals, certainly laid the foundation of that equality among the citizens of his commonwealth which is essential to the constitution of a perfect republic. Yet, under the Spartan government, there were some circumstances which seem totally adverse to this spirit of equality. It was adverse to equality that there should be any citizen invested with the honors and appendages of royalty. The idea of a king possessing rank without power is an absurdity; and if the law denies it him, it will be his constant endeavor to wrest and arrogate it. The high authority of the Ephori was likewise adverse to the spirit of equality. There was a perpetual contention for superiority of power between those magistrates and the kings; and the people, dividing themselves into parties, bribed to support those opposite and contending interests, furnished a continual source of faction and disorder.

In the Athenian republic the great defect of the constitution seemed to be in this, that it was doubtful where the supreme power was definitively lodged. The senate was, in theory, a wise institution, for it possessed the sole power of convoking the assemblies of the people, and of preparing all business that was to be the subject of discussion in those assemblies. But, on the other hand,

this senate being annually elected, its members were ever under the necessity of courting that people for their votes, and of flattering their prejudices and passions, by adopting and proposing measures which had no other end than to render themselves popular. These demagogues were therefore the most dependants on the mob who elected them. The guardians not merely of the people's rights, they were themselves the abject slaves of a corrupted populace. The wise purpose of the institution was thus utterly defeated by the single circumstance of the senators being annually elected. There were other radical defects in the constitution of Athens. All the offices of the state were by Solon destined to be filled from the three first classes of the richer citizens. The fourth or inferior class, (θῆτες,) had, however, an equal right of suffrage in the public assembly, and being superior in number to all the other three, had from thence power to carry every question against the higher classes. Thus there was a perpetual source of discord inherent in this constitution; the power and pre-eminence of office exclusively vested in one division of the people, which they would jealously maintain by every possible means: while, at the same time, the other was furnished with arms sufficient to defeat that power altogether, or, at least, to maintain at all times a violent struggle for superiority.

The best apology that can be made for Solon is, that his intentions were good. He knew that a constitution purely democratic is an absolute chimera in politics. He knew that the people are themselves incapable of exercising rule, and that, under one name or another, they must be led and controlled. He wished, therefore, to give them this control by the natural means which the rich possess over the poor; in other words, to moderate the discordant counsels of a populace, in whom by the rights of deciding, by the influence of an aristocracy who might lead or dictate those decisions; but he knew not how to accomplish this by a clear and explicit definition of the powers of the one body over the other; whence it happened, that neither part of the public having its rights and privileges well defined, they were perpetually quarrelling about the limits of authority, and instead of a salutary and cordial cooperation for the general good of the state, it was an eternal contest for supremacy, and a mutual desire of each other's abasement.

These, which may be esteemed radical defects in the constitution of the two principal republics of Greece, were heightened by several very impolitic laws and customs peculiar to each, which, as I formerly touched on them, I shall not recapitulate. It is sufficient to say, that the detail of the systems of Solon and Lycurgus, such as they are described to us by ancient writers, and the history of those rival republics, both in their quarrels with each other, in their foreign wars, and above all in their intestine factions and disorders, afford full conviction that the form of government which they enjoyed was in itself extremely faulty. The revolu-

tions to which those states, and particularly the former, was subject, plainly prove that their constitutions were not framed for stability, or for any long measure of duration; and the condition of the people (the true criterion of the merit of any political fabric) was, in reality, such as to partake more of actual servitude and oppression than the condition of the subjects of the most despotic monarchies. It is a known fact, that the slaves formed by far the greater part of the inhabitants, both of the Athenian and Lacedæmonian states; and to these, more especially at Lacedæmon, the free citizens behaved with the most inhuman rigor. Neither were the free citizens more inclined to a humane and liberal conduct to those of their own condition; a debtor became *ipso facto* the slave and bondman of his creditor, who might compel him to labor in bondage and fetters at his pleasure. Thus, a great part, even of the free citizens, was actually enslaved to the other; a circumstance which we shall see, under the Roman commonwealth, was the source of the most violent civil commotions. We may judge then with what propriety these can be termed free governments, where abject slavery was the condition of the majority of the people. Nor were the superior classes in the actual enjoyment of a rational liberty and independence. They were perpetually divided into factions, which servilely ranked themselves under the banners of the contending demagogues; and these maintained their influence over their partisans by the most shameful corruption and bribery, of which the means were supplied alone by the plunder of the public money. The whole, therefore, was a regular system of servitude, which left nothing free or ingenuous in the condition of individuals, nor any thing that can justly furnish encomium to an unprejudiced advocate for the dignity of human nature.

If such was the condition of the chief republics of antiquity, whose liberty we so frequently hear extolled with boundless encomium, and whose constitution we are taught from our childhood to admire, (and, in fact, this may fairly be ranked among the prejudices with which ingenuous youth can scarcely fail to be tinctured from a classical education,) it is not, perhaps, unreasonable to conclude, that a pure and perfect democracy is a thing not attainable by man, constituted as he is of contending elements of vice and virtue, and ever mainly influenced by the predominant principle of self-interest. It may, indeed, be confidently asserted, that there never was that government called a republic, which was not ultimately ruled by a single will, and, therefore, (however bold may seem the paradox,) virtually and substantially a monarchy. The only difference between governments, with respect to the political freedom of the subject, consists in the greater or the smaller number of restraints by which the regulating will is controlled. This subject is sufficiently important to merit a short illustration.

In every regular state there must be a governing power, whose will regulates the community. In the most despotic governments, that power is lodged in a single person, whose will is subject to no other control than that which arises from the fear of his own deposition. Of this we have an example in the Ottoman government, which approaches the nearest of any monarchy we know to a pure despotism. But in most monarchies, the will of the person called the sovereign is limited by certain constitutional restraints which he cannot transgress with safety. In the British government the will of the prince is controlled by a parliament; in other limited monarchies, by a council of state, whose powers are acknowledged and defined. But this parliament, or council, which thus limits the will of the prince, is in those matters where it exercises its right of limitation, superior to the will of the prince, and, therefore, in fact, the sovereign power of the state. Now this controlling power, consisting apparently of a number of wills, is, in reality, always led by a single will; by some individual of great and commanding talents, to whose acknowledged superiority his equals in rank or office either all pay a willing obedience, or whose partisans are generally sufficient to outnumber his opponents. Thus we have a single will in the council opposed to, or controlling the will of the prince. But where there are two contending wills, one must of necessity yield to the other. The king must either rule the leader of the council, or the latter must rule the former; and in this case, though not nominally, it cannot be denied that the latter is, in reality, in any such exercise of his will, the supreme power of the state.

Thus it is in limited monarchies. Now how does the matter stand with respect to a republic or democracy? Precisely the same. The people flatter themselves that they have the sovereign power. These are, in fact, words without meaning. It is true they elect their governors; but how are these elections brought about? In every instance of election by the mass of a people—through the influence of those governors themselves, and by means the most opposite to a free and disinterested choice, by the basest corruption and bribery. But these governors once elected, where is the boasted freedom of the people? They must submit to their rule and control, with the same abandonment of their natural liberty, the freedom of their will, and the command of their actions, as if they were under the rule of a monarch. But these governors, it is said, are, in a republic, chosen from the people itself, and therefore will respect its interests; they are not one but many, and the will of each will have a control from that of his fellows. That they are chosen from the people affords no pledge that they will either be wiser men, or less influenced by selfish ambition, or the passion of tyrannizing; all experience goes to prove the contrary: and that the will of the many is in truth a mere chimera, and ultimately resolves into the will of one, we

have already shown. An equality of power and a freedom of will cannot exist in a society of a hundred rulers, or even in a decemvirate, a triumvirate, or barely in a divided sovereignty, as the commonwealth of Sparta. The superior ability will constantly draw after it the superior command, and be in effect the sovereign of the state; it matters not under which name, whether emperor, king, consul, protector, stadtholder, or simply tribune or burgomaster.

If that principle I set out with is a truth, viz.: that actual experience deduced from the history of nations is the surest test of the truth or falsehood of any doctrine of politics, it may be no useless task if we endeavor to apply this criterion to some political doctrines which have the support of a great name, and have on that account obtained a pretty general currency.

The author of the "Spirit of Laws," a work which must ever be regarded as the production of a most enlightened mind, has built a great deal of plausible and ingenious reasoning on this general idea, that the three distinct forms of government, the monarchical, the despotic, and the republican, are influenced by three separate principles, upon which the whole system in each form is constructed, and on which it must depend for its support. "The principle of the monarchical form," says Montesquieu, "is *honor*; of the despotical, *fear*; and of the republican, *virtue*:" a position which, if true, would at once determine to which of the three forms the preference ought to be given in speculating on their comparative degrees of merit.

In order to examine this important position, which is the foundation of a most elaborate theory, and from which the author draws conclusions deeply affecting the interests of society, we shall take the example of the *republic*, with the nature and character of which form, we have had some opportunity of being acquainted from the preceding short sketch of the history of the Grecian commonwealths.

The ingenious author of an Essay on the History of Civil Society* thus enlarges on the idea of M. Montesquieu:—"In democracy," says he, "men must love equality; they must respect the rights of their fellow citizens; they must unite by the common ties of affection to the state. In forming personal pretensions, they must be satisfied with that degree of consideration which they can procure by their abilities fairly measured with those of an opponent. They must labor for the public without hope of profit. They must reject every attempt to create a personal dependence. Candor, force and elevation of mind, in short, are the props of democracy, and virtue is the principle required to its preservation." A beautiful picture—a state indeed of consummate perfection! But the author proceeds:—"How

* Dr. Adam Fergusson.

ardently should mankind wish for the form, if it tended to establish the principle, or were in every instance a sure indication of its presence! But perhaps we must have possessed the principle, in order, with any hopes of advantage, to receive the form." The last sentence is a fair and just conclusion, which needed not the cautious form in which it is expressed. The author plainly intimates his own opinion, to which every thinking mind will agree with him, that this beautiful picture, which he has drawn correctly after the sketch of Montesquieu, is nothing better than an Utopian theory; a splendid chimera, descriptive of a state of society that never did, and never could exist; a republic not of men, but of angels.

For where, it may be asked, was that democracy ever found on earth, where, in the words of this description, men loved equality; were satisfied with the degree of consideration they could procure by their abilities (duly measured with those of an opponent, a circumstance in itself utterly destructive of equality,) labored for the public without hope of profit, and rejected every attempt to create a personal dependence? Did such a government ever exist, or, while society consists of human beings, is it possible that such ever should exist? While man is a being instigated by the love of power—a passion visible in an infant, and common to us even with the inferior animals—he will seek personal superiority in preference to every matter of a general concern; or at best, he will employ himself in advancing the public good, as the means of individual distinction and elevation: he will promote the interest of the state from the selfish but most useful passion of making himself considerable in that establishment which he labors to aggrandize.

Such is the true picture of man as a political agent. But let us not be understood, that what is *here affirmed* with regard to the community at large, is strictly true of every member who composes it. If we look in vain for disinterested patriotism in the aggregate of a people, it would be a rash and unjust conclusion to assert that no such virtue exists in the breasts of individuals. The same evidence of history which proves the truth of the one assertion, would suffice to disprove the other. The annals of the Greek and Roman states record examples of the most exalted patriotic virtue in a few distinguished characters, whose names have come down with honor to modern times, and are destined to survive to the latest posterity. But these examples afford in themselves a proof which fully confirms the general proposition. The admiration which those virtuous individuals excited while they lived, the lasting honors that attend their memory, demonstrate the singularity and rareness of that character, the difficulty of its attainment, and thence the distinguished honors which it claims, as approaching as near as possible to the *ideal perfection* of human nature.

Dissenting as I do from the notion of Montesquieu, that virtue is the principle of a democratic government, I am yet ready to allow (what may seem at first view paradoxical) that this form of government is the best adapted to produce, though not the most frequent, yet the most striking, examples of virtue in individuals. But why? Even for a reason the very opposite to the opinion of that ingenious writer. A democratic government opposes more impediments to disinterested patriotism than any other form. To surmount these, a pitch of virtue is necessary which, in other situations, where the obstacles are less great and numerous, is not called into exertion. The nature of a republican government gives to every member of the state an equal right to cherish views of ambition, and to aspire to the highest offices of the commonwealth; it gives to every individual the same title with his fellows to aspire at the government of the whole. Where talents alone are sufficient to obtain weight and distinction, we may look for a display of ambition in all who have a high opinion of their own abilities. The number of candidates excites rivalships, contentions, and factions. The glorious names of liberty and patriotism are always found effectual to rouse and inflame the multitude; rarely indeed to blind them to the real character and views of the demagogue, but ever sufficient to be a mask for their own love of tumult and the hatred of their superiors. In such a state of society, how rare is genuine virtue; how singular the character of a truly disinterested patriot! He appears and he is treated as an imposter; he attempts to serve his country in its councils, or in offices; he is calumniated, reviled, and persecuted: he dies in disgrace or in banishment: and the same envy which maligned him living, embalms him dead, and showers encomiums on his memory, to depress and mortify the few surviving imitators of his virtues. We have seen, from the history of the Grecian states, that a democracy has produced some splendid models of genuine patriotism in the persons of Aristides, Miltiades, and Cimon. We have seen the reward that attended that character under this form of government, of which we are taught to believe that virtue is the principle.

In the science of politics, more than in any other, the greatest caution is necessary in the adoption of general positions. The theory of M. Montesquieu leads, apparently by fair induction, to a variety of consequences most deeply interesting to man, not only in his political, but in his moral capacity. How seriously ought those general propositions to be canvassed and scrutinized, from which their author has deduced such consequences as the following! *That as in a democracy there is no occasion for the principle of honor, so in a monarchy virtue is not at all necessary; that under the latter government the state can subsist independently of the love of country, of the passion of true glory, and of every heroic virtue; that the laws supply the place of those virtues, and*

*the state dispenses with them; that under a monarchy, a virtuous man ought not to hold office; that public employments ought to be venal;* * *and that crimes, if kept secret, are of no consequence.* † If, instead of these idle speculations, we take history for our guide, and thence form a fair estimate of the condition of the subject under all the different forms of the political machine, we shall be in no danger of having our reason blinded and abused by such absurd and pernicious chimeras, with whatever sophistry they are disguised to our understanding.

The history of the states of Greece exhibits in its earliest period a very general diffusion of the patriotic spirit, and the love of ingenuous freedom. These virtuous feelings became gradually corrupted as the nation advanced in power and splendor. Selfish ambition and the desire of rule in the commonwealth came in place of the thirst for national glory; and at length the enthusiasm for freedom, which was at first the glowing character of the Grecian states, gave place to an enthusiasm of another kind, still of an ingenuous nature, though far less worthy in its aim,—an admiration of the fine arts, a passion for the objects of taste, and all those refinements which are the offspring of luxury.

Patriotism always exists in the greatest degree in rude nations, and in an early period of society. Like all other affections and passions, it operates with the greatest force where it meets with the greatest difficulties. It seems to be a virtue which grows from opposition; which subsists in its greatest vigor amidst turbulence and dangers; but in a state of ease and safety, as if wanting its appropriate nourishment, it languishes and decays. We must not then wonder at that difference of patriotic character which distinguished the Greeks in the early ages of their history, from that by which they were known in their more advanced and more luxurious periods. It is a law of nature to which no experience has ever furnished an exception, that the rising grandeur and opulence of a nation must be balanced by the decline of its heroic virtues. When we find in the latter ages of the Grecian history, and in the declension of the Roman commonwealth and subsequent periods of the empire, no traces of that noble spirit of patriotism which excited our respect and admiration when they were infant and narrow establishments, it is not that the race of men had degenerated, or that the same soil and climate which formerly produced heroes could now only rear abject slaves and luxurious tyrants. Nature is still the same; and man comes the same from the hand of nature; but artificial causes have thrown him into that situation which affords no exercise to passions which once had their amplest scope and operation; which banishes virtue by dimin-

* Spirit of Laws, b. viii., c. 9.
† Spirit of Laws, b. iii., c. 5.

ishing its objects and annihilating its most substantial rewards; for wealth and ease and safety deny all exertion to heroic virtue; and in a society marked by these characteristics, such endowment can neither lead to power, to eminence, nor to fame.

Such was the situation of Greece, when, extending her conquests and importing both the wealth and the manners of foreign nations, she lost with her ancient poverty her ancient virtue. Venality and corruption pervaded every department of her states, and became the spring of all public measures, which, instead of tending to the national welfare, had for their only object the gratification of the selfish passions of individuals. Under these circumstances, it was no wonder that she should become an easy prey to a foreign power, which in fact rather purchased her in the market, than subdued her by force of arms.

Yet Greece, thus degenerate and fallen from the proud eminence she once maintained, continued in some respects to hold a distinguished rank among the contemporary nations. Conquered as she was, she continued in one point of view to preserve a high superiority even over the power which had subdued and enslaved her. Her progress in letters and philosophy, and her unrivalled eminence in the arts, compensated in some degree the loss of her national liberties, and forced even from her conquerors an avowal of her superiority in every department of science and mental energy. The victors did not blush to become the scholars of the vanquished. The most eminent of the Roman orators perfected themselves in their art in the school of Athens. The Greek philosophy had for some ages its disciples in Italy; and from the golden era of the administration of Pericles at Athens, the Greeks furnished the models of all that is excellent in the arts of poetry, painting, sculpture, and architecture.

We proceed, therefore, to take a short survey of the attainments of the Greeks in those departments of science and of art, beginning with an account of their extraordinary eminence in sculpture, painting, and architecture, in which they arrived at a pitch of perfection which has been the admiration and envy of all succeeding ages.

# CHAPTER VII.

The Greeks not eminent in the Useful Arts—Commerce—Superiority in the Fine Arts—Greek Architecture—Gothic Architecture—Sculpture—Inferiority of the Moderns—Greek religion favorable to Sculpture and Painting—Greek Painters.

It is not among the Greeks that we are to look for the greatest improvement in the useful or the necessary arts of life. When we speak of the excellence of this people in the arts, we are understood to mean those which, by distinction, are termed the fine arts, or those which mark the refinement of a people, and which come in the train of luxury. Agriculture, which deservedly holds the first rank among the useful arts of life, does not appear ever to have attained a remarkable degree of advancement among the Greeks.* At Sparta, this, as well as other arts, being confined to the slaves, it is not there that we are to look for any remarkable progress in those departments. With respect to Attica, the soil of that country was naturally barren: its best produce was the olive; and the Athenians too much readily confined themselves to that branch of husbandry, that it was little, if at all, attended to in any of the other states of Greece. That Attica produced little or no grain is evident from this fact, mentioned by Demosthenes, that the Athenians imported annually 400,000 medimni of corn. The medimnus was somewhat more than four pecks of English measure.

Deficient as the Greeks seem to have been in agriculture, they were not much more considerable as a commercial people. Xenophon, indeed, in his treatise on the Public Revenue, advises his countrymen to spare no pains in advancing their commerce, and lays it down as a sound maxim, that the riches of individuals constitute the strength of a state: but such ideas were repugnant to the common notions of his countrymen, at least in the earlier periods of the republics. The laws of Lycurgus, we have seen, proscribed commerce, with all other arts, as tending to produce an inequality of wealth: nor did the system of Solon give any encouragement to trade. Notwithstanding these impediments, however, from the time when the Greeks had seen and tasted the

* Plato de Legg. l. 7, and Aristotle in his Politic. l. 8, c. 10, both explode the practice of agriculture by the free-born citizens, and confine it to the slaves.

Asiatic luxuries, from the era of the invasion of Xerxes, the Athenians began to cultivate commerce with considerable assiduity. Corinth, we know, and the Greek colony of Syracuse, became from that source extremely opulent. They navigated the Mediterranean in large vessels, capable of containing 200 men; and in the age of Alexander we have seen a voyage performed, of ten months' duration, in sailing from the mouth of the Indus to Susa, in the farther extremity of the Persian Gulf.

But these were not the arts for which Greece was ever remarkable among the nations of antiquity. We must now speak of those for which she was eminently distinguished; in which she surpassed all the contemporary states, and of which the remaining monuments are at this day the models of anxious imitation, and the confessed standard of excellence in the judgment of the most polished nations of modern times. I speak of what are termed the *fine arts*, in all of which, *architecture*, *sculpture*, *painting*, and *music*, the Greeks were superlatively excellent.

After the defeat of Xerxes, the Greeks, secure for some time from foreign invaders, and in full possession of their liberty, achieved with distinguished glory, may certainly be considered as at the summit of their grandeur as a nation. They maintained for a considerable time their power and independence, and distinguished themselves during that period by an universality of genius unknown to other ages and nations. The fine arts bear a near affinity to each other; and it has seldom been known in any age which produced or encouraged artists in one department, that there were wanting others who displayed similar excellence in the rest. Of this, both ancient and modern history affords ample proof, in the ages of Pericles, of Leo X., and of Lewis XIV. The arts broke out at once with prodigious lustre at Athens, under the luxurious administration of Pericles. In architecture and sculpture, Phidias at that time distinguished himself by such superior ability, that his works were regarded as wonders by the ancients, as long as any knowledge or taste remained among them. His brother Panæus (or Panænas) was an able assistant in some of his noblest works, and is himself distinguished as the artist who painted the famous picture in the Pœcile at Athens, representing the battle of Marathon, which is described by Pausanias and Pliny as so perfect a picture, that it presented striking portraits of the leaders on both sides. It was from the designs of Phidias that many of the noblest buildings of Athens were reared; and from the example of these, a just and excellent taste in architecture soon diffused itself over all Greece. Phidias had many disciples; and after his time arose a succession of eminent architects, sculptors, and painters, who maintained those sister arts in high perfection for above a century, till after the death of Alexander the Great. This, therefore, may be termed the golden age of the arts in Greece; while in those departments the contempo-

rary nations were yet in the rudest ignorance. We shall afterwards see what reason there is to believe that the Etruscans were an exception from this observation: but it is certain that, whatever were their attainments in the fine arts in those remote ages, their successors, the Romans, inherited none of that knowledge from them; for at the period of the conquest of Greece, the Romans had not a tincture of taste in those arts, till they caught the infection from the precious spoils which the sole love of plunder then imported into Italy. But of this change operated on the taste and manners of the Romans, we shall, in its proper place, treat more at large. It is sufficient here to observe, that even when time had brought the arts to the highest perfection they ever attained among the Romans, the people never ceased to acknowledge the high superiority of the Greeks, of which we have this convincing proof, that when the Roman authors celebrate any exquisite production of art, it is ever the work of a Phidias, Praxiteles, Lysippus, Glycon, Zeuxis, Apelles, Parrhasius, or, in fine, of some artist who adorned that splendid period, and not of those who had worked at Rome, or who had lived nearer to their own times than the age of Alexander the Great.

The Greeks are universally acknowledged as the parents of architecture, or at least of that peculiar style of which all after ages have confessed the superior excellence. The Grecian architecture consisted of three different manners, or what artists have termed the three distinct orders: the *Doric*, *Ionic*, and *Corinthian*. The Doric was probably the first regular order among the Greeks. It has a masculine grandeur, and a superior air of strength to both the others. It is, therefore, the best adapted to works where magnitude and sublimity are the principal objects. Some of the most ancient temples of Greece were of this order, particularly that of Theseus at Athens, built ten years after the battle of Marathon, that is, 481 years before the Christian era; a fabric which has stood more than 2300 years, and is at this day almost entire.

One observation may here be made which is applicable to all the works of taste. The character of sublimity is chaste and simple. In the arts dependent on design, if the artist aim at this character, he must disregard all trivial decorations; nor must the eye be distracted by a multiplicity of parts. In architecture, there must be few divisions in the principal members of the building, and the parts must be large and of ample relief. There must be a modesty of decoration, contemning all minuteness of ornament, which distracts the eye, that ought to be filled with the general mass, and with the proportions of the greater parts to each other. In this respect the Doric is confessedly superior to all the other orders of architecture, as it unites strength and majesty with a becoming simplicity, and the utmost symmetry of proportions.

As the *beautiful* is more congenial to some tastes than the

*sublime*, the lightness and elegance of the Ionic order will, perhaps, find more admirers than the chastened severity of the Doric. The latter has been compared to the robust and muscular proportions of a man, while the former has been likened to the finer, more slender and delicate proportions of a woman. Yet the character of this order is likewise simplicity, which is as essential a requisite to true beauty as it is to grandeur and sublimity. But the simplicity of beauty is not inconsistent with that degree of ornament which would derogate from the simplicity of the sublime. The Ionic admits with propriety of decorations which would be unsuitable to the Doric. The volute of the Ionic capital, frequently ornamented with foliage, the entablature consisting of more parts, and often decorated with sculpture in *basso*, and even *alto rilievo*: all these have a propriety in this order of architecture, which is quite agreeable to its character. Of this order were constructed some of the noblest of the Greek temples; particularly the temple of Apollo at Miletus, that of the Delphic oracle, and the superb temple of Diana at Ephesus, classed among the wonders of the world.

The last of the Grecian orders of architecture is the Corinthian. It marks a period of luxury and magnificence, when pomp and splendor had become the predominant passion, but had not so far prevailed as to extinguish the taste for the sublime and beautiful. It had its origin at Corinth, one of the most luxurious cities of Greece; and was, probably, the production of an artist who wished to strike out a novelty agreeable to the reigning affectation of splendor, and to preserve at the same time a grandeur and beauty of proportions; thus studying at once to captivate the vulgar eye, and to preserve the approbation of the critic. Of this order were built many of the most superb temples of Greece, particularly that of Jupiter Olympius at Athens, founded by Pisistratus, but not completely finished till seven hundred years after, under the reign of Hadrian. Its remains are yet very considerable. But pleasing as this magnificent order may be to the general taste, it will hold but an inferior estimation with those who possess a refined judgment. It conveys not to the chastened eye that calm and sober pleasure which arises from grand and simple symmetry, or the effect of a few striking parts united to produce one great and harmonious whole; but leads off the attention to admire the minute elegance of its divisions, and solicits applause less from the production of a great and beautiful effect, than from the consideration of the labor, the cost, and artifice employed in its construction.

I have thus endeavored to give some idea of the distinct characters of the three different orders of Grecian architecture. They have been elegantly and happily distinguished by the poet of the Seasons:—

——— First unadorned
And nobly plain, the manly Doric rose;
The Ionic then with decent matron grace
Her airy pillar heaved; luxuriant last,
The rich Corinthian spread her wanton wreath.
*Thomson's Liberty*, part ii.

The foregoing remarks, it must be observed, are applicable only to those orders such as we find them in the chastest models of antiquity. It is but too certain that affectation even among the ancients corrupted the general taste: and that the caprice of artists aiming at novelty and singularity, often produced very faulty deviations from the distinct characters of each of those orders. The moderns, treading in their steps, have indulged a license still more unbounded; and such have been the whimsical innovations of architects, that even from the professed treatises on the art, it is difficult to determine what are the pure and unadulterated models of the several orders; so that, had not time happily spared to us at this day some precious remnants of the genuine architecture of the Greeks in its purity, we must in vain have sought for it, either in the practice of architects, or in their writings.

While on the subject of architecture, which, in books that treat of the science, exhibits five distinct orders, it would be improper here to omit mentioning the other two, the Tuscan and the Composite, though of Italian origin; or to pass over entirely in silence a complete species of architecture, which, arising in times comparatively modern to those of which we now treat, seems to have borrowed nothing from those models of antiquity, but to depend on principles and rules peculiar to itself.

The *Tuscan* order is, as I have said, of Italian origin. The Etruscans, long before the era when Rome is supposed to have been founded, were a splendid, an opulent, and a highly polished people. Of this, the monuments at this day remaining of their works in sculpture and painting afford a convincing proof; for, not to mention the subjects of those paintings which exhibit all the refinements of social life, the very eminence which they evince in the art of design presupposes wealth, luxury, and high civilization. It is true, those paintings are supposed to have been the work of Greek artists; but if those artists were encouraged by the Etruscans, and wrought for them, we must thence of necessity conclude that they were a most polished people. The Etruscan architecture appears to be nearly allied to the Grecian, but to possess an inferior degree of elegance. The more ancient buildings of Rome were probably of this species of architecture, though the proper Greek orders came afterwards to be in more general estimation. A respect, however, for antiquity prevented the Romans from ever entirely abandoning the Tuscan mode. The Trajan pillar is of this order of architecture. This magnificent column has braved the injuries of time, and is entire at the present day. Its excellence consists less in the form and proportions of

the pillar, than in the beautiful sculpture which decorates it. Of this fine sculpture, which represents the victories of Trajan over the Dacians, a very adequate idea may be formed from the engravings of the *Columna Trajana* by Bartoli.

The Composite order, likewise of Italian extraction, was unknown in the age of the perfection of Greek architecture. Vitruvius makes no mention of it. It seems to have been the production of some conceited artist, who wanted to strike out something new in that way, or to evince his superiority to the ancient masters; but it serves only to show that the Greeks had exhausted all the principles of united grandeur and beauty in the three orders before mentioned, and to prove that it is not possible to frame a new order unless by confusing and absurdly varying the old.

The *Gothic* architecture, which is often found to produce a very striking effect, offers no contradiction to the observations I have made on the different orders of Grecian architecture. The effect produced by the Gothic architecture is not to be accounted for on the same principle of conformity to the rules of symmetry or harmony, in the proportions observed between the several parts; but depends on a certain idea of vastness, gloominess, and solemnity, which we know to be powerful ingredients in the *sublime*. Nothing is more common than to hear some pretended *connoisseurs* —who derive all their opinions from certain general laws of taste, which they want the capacity of applying to their proper subject, and have no guidance of a natural feeling to discern where they are inapplicable—exclaim with great emphasis, that it is surprising that the Italians, who had before them so many precious monuments of the Greek architecture, should ever have given into a taste so barbarous as the Gothic; and this, perhaps, while they are gazing with vacancy of eye upon the cathedral of Milan, one of the noblest Gothic structures in the world. The truth is, the two species of architecture are so different, that no comparison can with justice be instituted between them. The object, indeed, of both is the same—to strike with pleasure, or with awe; but they employ means which are totally distinct, and both obtain their ends. I have observed that the sublime disregards all minuteness of ornament, which serves but to distract the eye. The Gothic architecture may be judged to offend in that particular; though it ought to be considered that in the best specimens of Gothic architecture, even where we find that minuteness of ornament, its effect is counterbalanced by the simplicity of the greater members of the fabric. The capital of a Gothic column, it is true, is crowded with a profusion of fantastic ornaments of men, beasts, birds, and plants; but that capital itself consists of few divisions; its column is of a magnitude that nobly fills the eye; the sudden elevation of the arch has something bold and aspiring; and while we contemplate the great and striking members of the

building, the minuteness of ornament on its parts is but transiently remarked, or noticed only as a superficial decoration, which detracts nothing from the grand effect of the whole mass.

To return: The Greeks, of all the nations of antiquity, possessed an unrivalled excellence in the arts depending on design. Sculpture and painting were brought by them to as high a point of perfection as architecture. It is the peculiar advantage of the art of sculpture, that, being ordinarily employed on the most durable materials, and such as possess small intrinsic value, it bids the fairest of all the arts to eternize the fame of the artist. While its works resist all natural decay from time, they afford no temptation to alter their form, or whilst consists their only value. They may lie hid from neglect in an age of ignorance: but they are safe, though buried in the earth; and avarice or industry, to supply the demands of an after age of taste, will probably recover them. What precious remains of ancient sculpture have, in the last three centuries, been dug out of the ruins of Rome! What treasures may we suppose yet remain in Greece and in the rest of Italy! To the discovery of some of these remnants of ancient art has been attributed the revival of painting and sculpture, after their total extinction during the middle ages. This, at least, is certain, that, as Michael Angelo and Raphael, feeling the beauties of the antique, began to emulate their noble manner, and introduced into their works, the one a grandeur, and the other a beauty unknown to the age in which they lived, the manner of their predecessors had been harsh, constrained, and utterly deficient in grace. Michael Angelo was so smitten with the beauties of the antique, that he occupied himself in drawing numberless sketches of a mutilated trunk of a statue of Hercules, still to be seen at Rome, and from him called the *Torso* of Michael Angelo. Raphael, whose works have entitled him to the same epithet which the Greeks bestowed on Apelles, *The Divine*—Raphael confessed the excellence of the antique, by borrowing from it many of his noblest airs and attitudes: and his enemies (for merit will ever have its enemies) have asserted, that of those gems and bass-relievos which he had been at pains to collect and copy, he destroyed not a few, in order that the beauties he had thence borrowed might pass for his own. The practice of those artists, whose names are the first among the moderns, affords sufficient argument of the superiority of the ancients. Their works remain the highest models of the art; and we who, in the imitation of the human figure, have not nature, as they had, constantly before our eyes undisguised, and in her most graceful and sublimest aspects, can find no means so short and so sure to attain to excellence, as by imitating the antique.

Every artist should accustom his eye to the contemplation of the antique, before he begins to work after nature; for this reason, that the antique presents nature without her defects, offering the collected result of all her scattered beauties, and these even

heightened by the imagination of the artist. The scholar who has thus made himself familiar with the antique, when he begins to imitate nature, will immediately discern her striking beauties, which, had he not seen them in the antique, separated entirely from her blemishes, he might never have learnt from his own taste to separate in the objects of nature: and here, it may be remarked by the way, lies the difference between the Flemish and the Italian schools. The Flemings were ignorant of the antique, and some of them, as Rembrandt, for example, held it in contempt. Nature was their prototype, which, it must be allowed, they have successfully imitated: but wanting judgment to discern her striking beauties, or to separate them from her defects, and utterly unconscious of that ideal beauty which results from this judgment, and towers far above nature, they have produced nothing noble, nothing graceful, nothing truly great.

I have said that the ancients, in the imitation of the human figure, had nature constantly before their eyes in her most graceful and sublimest aspects. The games of Greece, where the youth contended naked in the Palæstra, afforded a noble school for the improvement of sculpture and painting. Their artists there saw the finest figures of Greece in all the possible variety of attitudes—an advantage which no modern academy of design can furnish. What is it that strikes the intellectual eye in the ancient Greek statues? It is a grandeur united with simplicity—an unaffected air of beauty or of dignity, which is the result of the artist's observation of nature unconstrained. The naked model in our academies of painting, who is desired to throw his body into such an attitude of exertion as the painter wishes to copy, will show that attitude much more constrained and unnatural than a gladiator, for instance, or a wrestler, who is thrown into it unconsciously by a natural effort in a real combat in the arena. Could the artist who cut the admirable figure of the Dying Gladiator in the Capitol, have copied the wonderfully simple and natural position of the limbs, the relaxing muscles, and failing strength; or the lineaments of the face, expressive of the utmost anguish, yet endured with manly fortitude; could the sculptor have copied all this from the model of a figure in the academy? It is utterly impossible; no artificial disposition of the body could give the smallest idea of it. It is this same statue of the Dying Gladiator of which Pliny speaks, and which he has so admirably characterized in a few words: "*Cresilas vulneratum deficientem fecit, in quo possit intelligi quantum restet animæ.*"*

In like manner, in the admirable group of Niobe and her children, believed by some to be the work of Praxiteles, and by others

* "With such admirable art was the statue of the Dying Gladiator sculptured by Cresilas, that one could judge how much of life remained."

of Scopas,* the various attitudes there exhibited, though the most impassioned that can well be conceived, are yet altogether so natural, so simple, and unaffected, that they demonstrate the source from which they were drawn to have been nature itself, under the actual influence of passions similar to what the sculptor has expressed. Even in those single statues unexpressive of passion, and where no particular action is represented, as in the Antinous and the Belvidere Apollo, there is an ease and freedom of attitude which convinces us at first sight that the sculptor was not the servile copyist of a figure planted before him and directed to throw his limbs into a proper position, as a model in the academy. The sculptors of these statues drew from nature, but it was from nature unconstrained; it was that their eyes were familiarly acquainted with those attitudes; they saw them daily in their games and spectacles, and that habit of observation enabled them faithfully to represent them.

From this air of unrestrained nature, and particularly from that expression of calmness and of ease which is observable in many of the ancient statues, and which indicates the freedom of gesture of a person alone and unconscious of being observed, results that wonderful grace, which so few of the modern artists have attained the ability of expressing. Perhaps we may even doubt whether many of those artists have ever felt its excellence. To most modern artists and modern connoisseurs, the sedate grandeur, the simple and quiet attitude, appear lifeless and insipid. "The figure," they will tell you, "wants spirit: where is the air of the head? The limbs are carelessly disposed; they want attitude:" and the critic, to illustrate his meaning, will throw himself into a stage posture, or what are faithful copies of those postures, the paintings of the French school. Hogarth, in his *Analysis of Beauty*, has happily ridiculed this miserable taste, by representing a French dancing-master standing by the side of the beautiful figure of the *Antinous*, and teaching the awkward youth to hold up his head, and put on the air of a man of fashion. Such indeed are the fantastic innovations introduced by modern manners and fashion in disguising the human figure, that the sculptor or painter has no longer nature for his school of instruction, nor can any otherwise form a conception of her genuine and unsophisticated features than by contemplating them reflected in the precious works of the ancient masters.

* Praxiteles flourished 269 B. C. His merits, and an enumeration of his principal works in sculpture, may be found in Pliny, lib. 34, c. 8; and lib. 36, c. 5. He excelled chiefly in female beauty, and more particularly in the heads and arms of his figures, which were consummately graceful. The famous courtesan, Phryne, was the model for his Cnidian Venus, which is yet preserved, and known to the moderns by the name of the Venus de Medici. Scopas flourished 430 B. C. Many of his works are enumerated by Pliny, lib. 36, c. 5; and it is sufficient argument of his talents to say that the best judges of antiquity deemed many of his statues equal to those of Praxiteles.

Among the Greeks, Nature was not only seen without disguise, and in her noblest and most graceful attitudes: she was in reality in the human figure superior to what we now see in the ordinary race of men. Without adopting the whimsical hypothesis of some philosophers, that the moderns, compared with the ancients, are a degenerate breed, it may safely be asserted, that among the ancient Greeks, the youth, trained from infancy in the daily practice of gymnastic exercises, must have exhibited a finer form of body, a more perfect symmetry of limbs, and a shape more picturesque, than what must necessarily result from the constraint of the modern method of clothing, and the luxurious and comparatively effeminate system of modern education. The various forms of manly beauty exhibited in the Pythian Apollo, the Antinous, and the Fighting Gladiator, (if this statue be rightly so named,) are evidently far beyond the model of the human figure as we see it in the present race of men: but we have every reason to believe that their prototypes were to be found in those ages to which we now refer, though doubtless we must at the same time make allowance for the genius of the artist, in exalting and improving even that excellent Nature which presented itself to his eyes. In contemplating the figure of the *Farnesian Hercules*, the work of Glycon, what Horace, by an allowable metonymy, has termed the *invicti membra Glyconis*,* and in considering the prodigious strength of the back and shoulders, and strongly-marked distinction of the muscles in the breast and arms, we are apt at first view to censure the form as exaggerated beyond all nature: but in this superficial judgment we forget what was that nature which the sculptor had for his model of imitation, and do not consider, that to personify a divinity whose characteristic attribute was strength, it was necessary that that nature, superior as it was, should be amplified and exalted by the imagination of the artist. Of this heightening of nature the Greek sculptors have given the noblest examples in the representation of their gods: "Non vidit Phidias Jovem," says Seneca, "nec stetit ante oculos ejus Minerva: dignus tamen illa arte animus et concepit deos, et exhibuit." †

And this leads me to remark what must have been likewise another and a very powerful source of the advancement of the arts of design among the Greeks. The Grecian mythology furnished a most ample source for the exercise of the genius of the painter and sculptor. The distinct and characteristic attributes of the several deities, their actions, and the poetical fables connected

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* "The limbs of the invincible Glycon," for the invincible limbs of his statue.

† "Phidias never saw Jupiter, nor did Minerva present herself to his eyes: but his mind, worthy of his art, both formed these divine conceptions and represented them."

with their history, furnished an inexhaustible supply of sublime, beautiful, and highly pleasing subjects. We know, since the revival of the arts, how much those of painting and sculpture have been indebted to the Roman Catholic religion, which furnishes not only an abundant demand for the works of the artist, but supplies him with an endless variety of subjects in the lives of its numerous saints and martyrs. But in this respect at least the Roman Catholic religion must yield to that of Greece, that the painful and often shocking scenes which it presents for the pencil will bear no comparison with the varied, gay, and amusing pictures of the pagan mythology.

Of the ability of the Greeks in painting, we must speak with more diffidence than we have done of their superiority in sculpture. Of the latter, those admirable works yet remaining, justify the highest encomiums that can be bestowed upon them. Of the former, it would be unjust to form any estimate from those inconsiderable specimens supposed of Grecian painting, which time has yet left undestroyed. The paintings discovered in Herculaneum, the celebrated picture of a marriage in the Aldobrandini collection, those found in the *Sepulcrum Nasonianum* at Rome, and other pieces enumerated by Dutens,* were probably the work of Greek artists; for we have no evidence that the Romans ever carried any of the arts depending on design to much perfection. But with regard to the Greeks the case is very different. Their excellence in the art of painting is loudly proclaimed by all antiquity. Of their eminence in the kindred art of sculpture we are ourselves the judges. Now we cannot reasonably call in question the taste of those ancient authors who have written in praise of the paintings of the Greeks, when we find the same judgment which they have

* As M. Dutens, in his amusing and instructive essay on the Discoveries attributed to the Moderns, has enumerated, it is believed, all the existing remains of the genuine paintings of the ancients, it may afford satisfaction to readers of curiosity, to see the complete catalogue as given by that author. "The ancient paintings still to be seen at Rome are, a reclining Venus at full length, in the palace of Barberini, the Aldobrandine nuptials, a Coriolanus in one of the cells of Titus' baths, and seven other pieces taken out of a vault at the foot of Mount Palatine, among which are a Satyr drinking out of a horn, and a landscape with figures, both of the utmost beauty. There are also a sacrificial piece consisting of three figures, and an Œdipus and a Sphinx, all of which formerly belonged to the tomb of Ovid. The pictures discovered at Herculaneum disclose beyond all others a happiness of design and boldness of expression that could proceed only from the hands of the most accomplished artists. The picture of Theseus vanquishing the Minotaur, that of the birth of Telephus, Chiron, and Achilles, and Pan and Olympe, present innumerable beauties to all persons of discernment. There were found, also, in the ruins of that city, four capital pictures, wherein beauty of design seems to vie with the most skilful management of the pencil, and which appear to be of an earlier date than those before spoken of."—*Dutens*, p. 370. [Some paintings of great spirit have, since our author wrote, been discovered at Pompeii; but these were only the *furniture-pictures*, so to speak, of a private residence in a provincial town.]

given upon the works of sculpture, confirmed by the universal assent of modern critics. If we find that Pliny is not guilty of exaggeration or censurable for false taste when he extols the noble group of *Laocoon and his sons*,* terming it "a work excelling all that the arts of painting and sculpture have ever produced," why should we suppose that he exaggerated, or that his taste was not equally just, when he celebrates the praises and critically characterizes the different manners and distinct merits of Zeuxis,† Apelles, Aristides the Theban,‡ Parrhasius, Protogenes and Timanthes? Parrhasius seems to have been the Correggio of antiquity; possessing the talent, and displaying the pleasing, elegant, and rounded contour of this artist. Pliny (lib. 35, c. 10,) in characterizing the paintings of this artist, commends chiefly in his figures the *argutus vultus, elegantiæ capilli, et venustæ oris*,§ and highly praises the correctness of his outline. The same writer mentions an allegorical painting of Parrhasius, representative of the character of the Athenians, in which the artist seems to have formed a just idea of that inconstant and fickle populace. "*Pinxit et Demon Athenaiensium, argumento quoque ingenioso; voluit namque varium, incundum, injustum, iracundum, — eundem eorum lubilem, clementem, misericordem, excelsum, gloriosum, humilem, ferocem, fugacemque, et omnia pariter ostendere.*" ‖ It were to be

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* "Sicut in Laocoonte, qui est in Titi Imperatoris domo, opus omnibus et picturæ et statuariæ artis præferendum, ex uno lapide eum et liberos draconumque mirabiles nexus de consilii sententia fecere summi artifices Agesander et Polydorus et Athenodorus Rhodii."—*Plin.* l. xxxvi. c. 5.

† Zeuxis flourished 397 B. C. The ancient authors are very high in their praises of the works of this great painter. He was peculiarly excellent in painting female beauty. Dionysius of Halicarnassus informs us that the people of Crotona, wanting him to paint a naked Helen, sent him five of the most beautiful young women of their city, whose separate perfections he united in his picture, and produced a miracle of beauty. Cicero gives the story at large, and *con amore*. He tells us that Zeuxis was brought to the Palæstra and shown a great number of the most beautiful boys. "These," said his conductors, "have as many sisters, whose beauty you may easily guess from what you now see." "Nay, but," said Zeuxis, "send me the young women." The Crotonians held a public council on that request, and it was agreed to furnish him with what he demanded.—*Cic. de Invent. Rhet.* l. 2.

‡ Aristides flourished in the age of Alexander the Great, and was contemporary with Apelles, Parrhasius, and Timanthes. Pliny says of Aristides, that his paintings were the first which gave the expression of the soul and the feelings: and as an instance, he mentions a celebrated picture of Aristides, in which, in a besieged city, a mother is represented dying of a wound in her breast, and holding back her child lest it should suck blood instead of milk: a picture which is supposed to be the subject of a beautiful epigram in the Anthologia, thus happily translated by Webb, in his Beauties of Painting:

> "Suck, little wretch, while yet thy mother lives,
> Suck the last drop her fainting bosom gives:
> She dies; her tenderness survives her breath,
> And her fond love is provident in death."

§ "The arch expression, the beauty of the hair, and charm of the mouth."

‖ "He painted also an ingenious allegorical picture of the Genius of the Athe-

wished that Pliny had given us some idea of the composition of a picture so extraordinary in point of subject.

If Parrhasius was the Correggio, Apelles was indisputably the Raphael of antiquity: "*Omnes prius genitos, futurosque postea superavit Apelles*,"* are the words of Pliny, who, in his estimates of the works of art, is generally supposed to speak less from his own taste than from the common opinion of the best judges of antiquity. The peculiar excellence of Apelles, as of Raphael, lay in that consummate gracefulness of air which he imparted to his figures, and in which he surpassed all his rivals in the arts. "*Præcipua Apellis in arte venustas fuit, cum eâdem ætate maximi pictores essent; quorum opera quam admiraretur, collaudatis omnibus, deesse iis unam illam venerem dicebat quam Græci* Χάριτα *vocant: cætera omnia contigisse, sed hac soli sibi neminem parem.*"†—Plin. l. 35, c. 10. It is well known that Alexander the Great had the highest esteem of this artist; and having employed him to paint his mistress Campaspe, showed a singular example of generosity and self-command, in bestowing her as a gift on his friend the painter, who had fallen in love with his beautiful model. It was a high testimony to the merits of the artists, but it was at the same time a judicious policy for himself, that Alexander would suffer no other painter, statuary, or engraver, to form his effigy, than Apelles, Lysippus, and Pyrgoteles; a fact which accounts for the singular beauty and excellence of all the figures yet remaining of that prince.

To the merits of Protogenes, a critic of genuine taste among the ancients has borne a high testimony: I speak of Petronius Arbiter. That author, mentioning his having seen in the palace of Trimalchio (Nero) some sketches by the hand of Protogenes, says that on handling them, he felt a reverential awe, as if they had been something more than human.‡ It was to the high excellence of Protogenes as an artist, that the city of Rhodes, the place of his nativity, owed its preservation when besieged by Demetrius Poliorcetes. When that prince saw no other means of reducing the

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nians, representing a being at one and the same time fickle, irascible, unjust, inconstant, yet placable and compassionate, vainglorious yet humble, ferocious yet cowardly."

* "Apelles surpassed all who had gone before, and all who will ever come after him."

† "In the grace of his pictures Apelles surpassed all the great painters of his age: whatever praise was bestowed on their works, still that peculiar beauty which the Greeks term Χάριτα (Grace) was wanting; in the other qualities of his art, others may have attained equal perfection, but in this he was unrivalled."

‡ In pinacothecam perveni vario genere tabularum mirabilem; nam et Zeuxidos manus vidi, nondum vetustatis injuria victas: et Protogenis rudimenta cum ipsius naturæ veritate certantia, non sine quodam horrore tractavi. Jam vero Apellis quam Græci *monocnemon* appellant, etiam adoravi. Tanta enim subtilitate extremitates imaginum erant ad similitudinem præcisæ, ut crederes etiam animorum esse picturam.—Pet. Arb. Satyr.

city than by setting it on fire in a particular quarter, in which there was a celebrated painting of Protogenes, he chose rather to abandon the enterprise than hazard the destruction of what was, in his opinion, of the highest value.

On the whole, if we have not the same demonstrative evidence of the attainments of the Greeks in painting that we have of their eminence in sculpture, namely, the existing monuments of the art, we have every degree of presumptive evidence which the subject can admit to warrant an opinion of an equal degree of excellence. These arts require the same talents, their progress is influenced by the same moral causes, they owe their advancement to the same taste and genius; and it is impossible to suppose the one to have been successfully cultivated in any age or nation, while the other remained in a rude and imperfect state.*

If any apology were necessary for the length of the preceding observations on the state of the arts in Greece, I would remark, that as it is the province of history to exhibit the character and genius of nations, so the national character of the Greeks was in nothing more signally displayed than in those branches of art to which I have called the reader's attention in this chapter. In tracing the mutual relation of moral and political causes, this peculiar genius of the Greeks will be found to have extended its influence to the revolutions of their states, and to their fate as a nation. Its advancement marked the decline of the severer morals and the fall of the martial spirit: for the fine arts cannot exist in splendor, but in a soil of luxury and of ease. The taste for these supplanted the appetite for national glory, and at length ignominously supplied the place of public virtue. The degenerate Greeks were consoled for the loss of their liberty by the flattering distinction of being the humanizers of their conquerors, the *magistri et arbitri elegantiarum* to the unpolished Romans.

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* For a most ample account of the ancient painters, sculptors, and architects, drawn from the writings of the Greek and Roman authors, the reader is referred to the learned work of *Junius de Pictura Veterum*, and the catalogue of artists subjoined to that work. See likewise a very ingenious and learned Dissertation on the Painting of the Ancients, by T. Cooper, Esq., in the third volume of Mem. of the Lit. and Phil. Soc. of Manchester.

# CHAPTER VIII.

Public games of Greece — Effects on character — Manners — Poetical composition anterior to prose — Homer—Hesiod—Archilochus—Terpander—Sappho—Pindar — Anacreon — The Greek epigram — The Greek comedy, distinguished into the old, the middle, and the new — Aristophanes — Menander — Greek tragedy—Æschylus—Euripides — Sophocles — Mode of dramatic representation — The ancient drama set to music —The Mimes and Pantomimes — Of the Greek historians—Herodotus—Thucydides—Xenophon — Polybius — Diodorus Siculus—Dionysius of Halicarnassus —Arrian—Plutarch.

UNDER the early part of the Grecian history we had occasion to treat of the origin, and somewhat of the nature, of the public games of Greece. Among all nations, in that period of society when war is not reduced to a science, but every battle is a multitude of single combats, we find those exercises in frequent use which tend to increase the bodily strength and activity. The Greeks, however, seem to have been the first who reduced the athletic exercises to a system, and considered them as an object of general attention and importance. The Panathenæan, and afterwards the Olympic, the Pythian, the Nemæan, and the Isthmian games, were under the sanction of the laws, and subject to the regulations laid down by the ablest statesmen and legislators. They were resorted to, not only by the citizens of all the states of Greece, but even by the neighboring nations. Thus not only was a spirit of union and good understanding kept up between the several states, which, in spite of their frequent dissensions and hostilities, made them always regard each other as countrymen, and unite cordially against a common enemy; but this partial intercourse which the games produced with the inhabitants of other countries, induced an acquaintance with their manners and genius, and contributed very early to polish away the rust of barbarism. In those games, therefore, we may see the cause of two opposite effects: that Greece, in the early period of her history, was distinguished for martial ardor and military prowess; and that in the latter ages, elegance, politeness, and refinement were her predominant characteristics.

This passion of the Greeks for shows and games, extremely laudable, and even beneficial, when confined within due bounds, was carried, at length, to a most blamable and pernicious excess. The victor, in the Olympic games, who had gained the first prize at running, wrestling, or driving a chariot, was crowned with higher honors than the general who had gained a decisive battle. His

praises were sung by the poets: he had statues, and even temples, dedicated to his name. Cicero remarks, that among the Greeks it was accounted more glorious to carry off the palm at the Olympic games, than among the Romans to have obtained the honors of a triumph.* Of these nations, it was easy to foretell which was doomed to be the master, and which the slave.

The games of Greece were not exclusively appropriated to gymnastic and athletic exercises. These numerous assemblies were the resort, likewise, of the poets, the historians, the rhapsodists, and even the philosophers.

It is a singular fact, that in all nations there have been poets before there were writers in prose. The most ancient prose writers among the Greeks, of whom we have any mention, Pherecydes of Scyros, and Cadmus of Miletus, were posterior above 350 years to Homer. Of those poets who preceded Homer, some of whom are supposed to have been anterior to the Trojan war, as Linus and Orpheus, we have no remains. †

Homer, of whose birth both the place and the era are very uncertain, is, according to the most probable opinion, believed to have been a native of Ionia, and to have flourished 277 years after the taking of Troy; that is, 970 years before the birth of Christ. This illustrious man, the father of poetry, was, probably, a wandering minstrel, who earned his subsistence by strolling from one city to another, and frequenting public festivals and the tables of the great, where his music and verses procured him a welcome reception. Lycurgus, the Spartan lawgiver, is said to have been the first who brought from Ionia into Greece complete copies of the Iliad and Odyssey; which, however, were not arranged in the order in which we now see them, till 250 years afterwards, by Pisistratus, tyrant of Athens. The method which he took to collect those poems, by offering rewards to all who could recite, or produce in writing, any of the compositions of Homer, renders it probable that those poems had originally been composed in detached ballads, or rhapsodies.‡ From these various recitations, which were carefully transcribed, Pisistratus caused certain learned men of his court to prepare what they considered the most perfect copies, and to methodize the whole into regular poems, as we

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* Propè major et gloriosius quam Romæ triumphasse.—*Ac. Orat. pro Flacco.*

† Linus is feigned to have been the son of Apollo, and is said to have been the first lyric poet. Stobæus gives some verses under the name of Linus; but they are believed not to be authentic. The fragments published under the name of Orpheus, in the *Poetæ minores Græci*, and other collections, are plainly supposititious, being entirely destitute of the air of remote antiquity. The poem of the Argonauts, which is attributed to him, is, on the authority of Stobæus and Suidas, the work of Onomacritus, who lived in the time of Pisistratus. *See* Suidæ Lex. *sub voce Orpheus.*

‡ A passage of Athenæus confirms this notion. He tells us that the rehearsers of detached ballads, or Ῥαψῳδοί, were called Ὀμηρισταί.—*Ath. Deip.* l. xiv.

now find the Iliad and Odyssey. The division of each poem into twenty-four books is supposed to have been a later operation, as none of the classic authors quote Homer by books.

The poems of the Iliad and Odyssey were again revised by Callisthenes and Anaxarchus, at the command of Alexander the Great, who, it is well known, held them in the highest esteem. They were finally revised by the celebrated grammarian and critic, Aristarchus, by order of Ptolemy Philometor, and this last corrected copy is supposed to be the exemplar of all the subsequent editions. But the genuine merits of Homer are independent of all artificial arrangement. His profound knowledge of human nature —his masterly skill in the delineation of character—his extensive acquaintance with the manners, the arts, and attainments of those early ages—his command of the passions—his genius for the sublime, and the melody of his poetical numbers, have deservedly established his reputation as the greatest poet of antiquity. It has been justly remarked, that from the poems of Homer, as from the fountain of knowledge, the principal writers among the ancients have derived useful information in almost every department, moral, political and scientific.*

Although the subjects of the Iliad and Odyssey appear of great amplitude and extent, the action of both poems is, in reality, comprehended within a very short space of time. The action of the Iliad does not occupy many days. The indignation of Achilles upon the insult received from Agamemnon, forms the subject of the poem. Achilles retires to his tent in deep resentment. His absence dispirits the Greeks, and gives fresh courage to the Trojans, who gain some considerable advantages, and are occupied in burning the Grecian fleet, when Patroclus comes forth, in the armor of his friend Achilles, to stimulate the valor of his countrymen. He is slain by the hand of Hector; an event which rouses Achilles from his sullen reptiles, who signally revenges the fate of his friend by the death of the magnanimous Hector. He then celebrates the obsequies of Patroclus, and delivers up to Priam, for a ransom, the body of his brave son. This is in brief the whole action of the Iliad.

The structure of the Odyssey, of which the principal action is included in a period of time equally short, is more various and artful than that of the Iliad. Ulysses had been absent many years from his country, after the taking of Troy. His death was supposed certain; and Penelope, harassed by the importunate addresses of many suitors, could no longer invent plausible pretexts for delaying her choice of a second husband. At this crisis, the

* Adjice Mæonidem; a quo ceu fonte perenni,
Vatum Pieriis ora rigantur aquis.—*Ovid.*
And not only the poets, but, as Longinus informs us, the historians and philosophers drew largely from his copious source.

action of the Odyssey commences. Telemachus, the son of Ulysses, goes to Greece to interrogate Nestor regarding the fate of his father; and during his absence, Ulysses, having left the island of Calypso, is thrown by a tempest on the island of the Phæacians, in the neighborhood of Ithaca. Here he recites his various adventures, and obtains assistance from the prince of the country, for the recovery of his native possessions, now occupied and pillaged by the insolent suitors of his queen. He arrives in Ithaca, discovers himself to his son, and takes jointly with him effectual measures to accomplish his revenge, and extirpate these presumptuous ravagers. The whole action of the poem is comprised in forty days. The moral of the Iliad is, that dissension among the chiefs of a country is generally fatal to the people: and that of the Odyssey, that prudence joined to courage and perseverance are sufficient to surmount the most powerful obstacles.

The authenticity of the historical facts recorded by Homer has been much controverted. Even the war of the Greeks against Troy, and its ultimate issue in the destruction of that city, have been altogether doubted: and there are writers, of some name, who deny that Troy was ever taken by the Greeks—nay, that any such city as Troy ever had an existence. To this notion some countenance is derived from the circumstance that no vestige of a city is now to be found in the place of its supposed situation. But the universal belief of antiquity, and constant reference of the best informed of the ancient writers to the general events of the Trojan war, and the facts connected with that belief in the authentic history of ancient Greece and Rome, seem to afford, at least, a much stronger presumption of veracity to the general opinion than to its contrary. Were it to be an established rule, that every thing should be retrenched from the annals of nations for which we have not the most complete and irrefragable evidence, the body of ancient history would suffer indeed a great abridgment.

As the Ionic was the native dialect of Homer, so it is that which he has chiefly employed, though not exclusively, availing himself occasionally of the Attic, the Doric, and the Æolic, as well as of the general license of the poetic. Hence that variety in the rhythm and melody of his composition, which never palls upon the ear; and hence, likewise, the happy coincidence of sound and sense, which seems in him to have been less the result of study and artifice, than of a musical ear, which instinctively prompted the most appropriate expression, to give the greatest possible effect to the thought or idea to be conveyed.

Besides the great works of the Iliad and Odyssey, the ludicrous poem of the *Batrachomyomachia*, or Battle of the Frogs and Mice, has been generally ascribed to Homer; and likewise a pretty numerous collection of hymns in honor of Apollo, Mercury, Venus, and the other divinities of his country. Of all these, however, the authenticity is questionable; though they have been cited as

genuine by Thucydides, Lucian, Pausanias, and others among the ancient writers, and are in themselves of sufficient worth to give no discountenance to the common belief. The *Margites*, an undoubted work of Homer, of a comic nature, of which no remnant is preserved, is likewise cited by Aristotle and the ancient writers as a composition worthy of its author.

Contemporary with Homer, or but a few years posterior to him, was Hesiod: a poet who seems to be more indebted for any share of esteem which he holds with the moderns, to his remote antiquity, and to the praises he has received from ancient writers,* than to any feeling of the real merit of his compositions. That Virgil highly esteemed Hesiod as a poet, is evident from the many imitations of the Greek author which occur in the first and second books of the Georgics: nor is it, perhaps, a rash supposition, that Virgil had conceived the entire idea of his didactic poem on Agriculture, from the *Works and Days* of Hesiod. In two passages of the Eclogues, Virgil alludes to Hesiod with encomium:

——— et quis fuit alter
Descripsit radio totum qui gentibus orbem,
Tempora quæ messor, quæ curvus arator haberet? †—*Ecl.* iii.

And, as the highest compliment to his friend Gallus, after introducing him to Apollo and the Muses, he makes the Heliconian maids present him, by the hand of Linus, with the same pipe which they had formerly bestowed upon Hesiod, the Ascræan old man.

—— hos tibi dant calamos en accipe, musæ
Ascræo quos ante seni; quibus ille solebat
Cantando rigidas deducere montibus ornos.‡—*Ecl.* vi.

Of the authentic writings of Hesiod two entire works remain; the poem of *The Works and Days* and *The Theogony*. The poem of the Works and Days, Ἔργα καὶ Ἡμέραι, consists of two books: the first commences with the fables of Prometheus, Epimetheus, and Pandora, the Five Ages of the World, the Golden, Silver, Brazen, Heroic, and Iron Ages; the poet proceeds to give an ample encomium on virtue, enforced by the consideration of the temporal blessings with which its practice is attended, and the punishment which awaits vice even in this world; and he thence eloquently enlarges on the chief moral duties essential to the conduct of life. In the second book, the poet lays down a series of

* Hesiodus—vir perelegantis ingenii, et mollissima dulcedine carminum memorabilis.—*Vell. Paterc.* lib. i.

† "And the other—he who first indicated the divisions of the earth into different nations and peoples, and taught the husbandman the seasons of harvest and seed-time."

‡ "Take it, then—the Muses assign to you this pipe, formerly conferred by them on the Ascræan sage, with which he was wont to charm even the obdurate elms from their mountains."

precepts in agriculture, and details the various occupations of the husbandman at the different seasons of the year: he thence digresses to the proper seasons for navigation; lays down judicious maxims for domestic life in the choice of a wife, friends, companions, &c.; and concludes with enforcing the duties of religion, and a strict regard to good morals, and a general purity of conduct.

The poem of *The Theogony* contains a genealogy of the greater and lesser deities and deified heroes of antiquity; with the mythology or fabulous history connected with the religion of ancient Greece. This poem is the original source from which all the subsequent Greek and Roman mythologists have derived their accounts of the birth, parentage, and exploits of the heathen divinities, and the details of those fables which supply the place of authentic history in those ages properly termed the Heroic.

About two centuries posterior to the age of Homer and of Hesiod, flourished Archilochus, the inventer of Iambic verse—a poet whose depravity of morals brought on him contempt and infamy during life; but whose works, after his death, divided, as we are told, the public estimation with those of Homer. Yet as these works were of the lyric kind, it is not possible they could admit of a degree of merit which could at all stand in competition with those noble pictures of life and manners which are delineated by that prince of poets. Some fragments of Archilochus are preserved by Athenæus, lib. xiv.; by Pausanias, lib. x.; and by Stobæus, serm. 123. Contemporary with Archilochus was Terpander, a native of Lesbos, who is celebrated no less for his lyrical compositions, than for his exquisite talents as a musician. Of his verses we have no remains.* The two succeeding centuries were distinguished by nine lyric poets of great celebrity: Alcman and Stesichorus, of whom we have a few imperfect remains preserved by Athenæus, Stobæus, &c.; Sappho, of whom we have two beautiful odes; Alcæus, Simonides, Ibycus, and Bacchylides, of whom there remain considerable fragments in a mutilated state; and Pindar and Anacreon, of whom so much is preserved as to enable us to form a just estimate of their merits.

Pindar, in the judgment of the ancients, was esteemed the chief of all the lyric poets. We have of his composition four books of odes, or triumphal eulogies of the victors in the Olympic, Pythian, Nemæan, and Isthmian Games of Greece. It required a great power of poetical imagination to give variety and interest to a theme of so limited a nature, through a succession of no less than forty-five panegyrics; and without doubt the poet has displayed unbounded imagination, and the most excursive fancy. It is, how-

* Plutarch informs us that Terpander was the inventor of those melodies or musical strains in which it was customary to recite the poetical compositions in the public games or contests for the palm of poetry; and that in particular he sung to strains of his own composition the poems of Homer, as well as his own.

ever, to be suspected that the high admiration expressed by any modern for the compositions of Pindar, has either in it a considerable tincture of affectation, or is the result of a blind assent to the opinion of Horace, and others of the ancient writers, who have exalted the Theban bard as beyond all reach of competition, or even imitation. The sober critics of antiquity, in judging of his merits, have not shown the same indiscriminating enthusiasm. Longinus confesses that Pindar, with all his sublimity, is apt to sink below mediocrity, and that his fire is sometimes altogether extinguished when we least expect it: and Aulus Gellius gives it as the general opinion, that the poetry of Pindar is florid and turgid to excess.* Yet we can discern in him many striking figures, great energy of expression, and often the most harmonious numbers.

Anacreon is a great contrast to Pindar. His fancy, which has no great range, is employed only in suggesting familiar and luxurious pictures. He has no comprehension of the sublime of poetry, and little of the tender, delicate or ingenious in sentiment. He is a professed voluptuary, of loose and abandoned principles; and his compositions, though easy, graceful, and harmonious, are too immoral to find favor with the friends of virtue.

Of the Greek lyric poetry, if the epigram may be classed under that denomination, the collection called *Anthologia* has preserved a great many very beautiful specimens. With a few exceptions, they are free from that coarseness and obscenity which disgrace the compositions of the Roman epigrammatists, particularly Martial and Catullus. The Anthologia was compiled by a monk of the fourteenth century; but it consists almost entirely of ancient productions, and is altogether a valuable monument of the Greek literature and taste. The best of the modern epigrams may be traced up to that source, and the English and French poets have frequently plundered the Anthologia without the least acknowledgment.†

Considering the Anthologia as affording the best examples of this species of composition, we may thence observe that the ancients did not altogether annex the same meaning that we do to the term epigram; which we consider as always displaying a point or witticism, consisting of a single thought, briefly and brilliantly expressed. The ancients required likewise brevity and unity of thought, but they did not consider point or witticism as essential to epigram. Martial and Catullus are frequently witty:

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* Noct. Att., l. xvii. c. 10.

† It is no inconsiderable testimony to the merits of the Greek epigram, that the great moralist, Dr. Samuel Johnson, sought a relief from the pains attendant on his death-bed, in translating into English and Latin verse some of the best epigrams of the Anthologia.

but the principal characteristic of the Greek epigram is ingenuity and simplicity, or what the French term *naïveté*.

The era of dramatic composition among the Greeks is supposed to have commenced about 590 B. C.* Thespis, who is said to have been the inventor of tragedy, † was contemporary with Solon; and if the drama originated with the Athenians, it is equally certain that they brought it to a very high pitch of perfection. The Greek comedy has been divided into three distinct classes, the *old*, the *middle*, and the *new*. Of the old comedy, which is noted for the extreme freedom and severity of its satire, the principal dramatists were Eupolis, Cratinus, and Aristophanes.

> Eupolis atque Cratinus, Aristophanesque poetæ,
> Atque alii quorum Comœdia prisca virorum est,
> Siquis erat dignus describi, quod malus ac fur,
> Quod mœchus foret, aut sicarius, aut alioqui
> Famosus,‡ multa cum libertate notabant.
>
> *Hor. Sat.* lib. i. sat. 4.

And it had been well if their satire had been confined to the vicious alone and notoriously profligate. We might excuse, when such were the sole objects of castigation, even the unbridled license with which they wielded the iron scourge of sarcasm. Unfortunately their censure was not so discriminating, as appears by the dramas of Aristophanes, yet preserved entire.

If it be true, that under the administration of Pericles at Athens, all compositions for the stage were submitted to the review of certain judges, whose approbation it was necessary to obtain before they were allowed to be performed, it is not easy to account for those gross immoralities and violations of common decency which are to be found in the comedies of Aristophanes. Of this author's composition, we have eleven dramatic pieces, which, it

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* Aristotle considers Homer as the founder of the drama among the Greeks —not as having himself written any composition strictly of a dramatic nature, but as having led the way to it, by his lively representations of life and manners, both in the more serious and graver aspects and in the comic; his Iliad and Odyssey bearing the same relation to tragedy, that his *Margites* does to comedy.—*Arist. de Poet.* c. 4.

† Mr. Harris thus plausibly accounts for the priority of tragedy to comedy in the poetry of all nations: "It appears, that not only in Greece, but in other countries more barbarous, the first writings were in metre, and of an epic cast, recording wars, battles, heroes, ghosts, the marvellous always, and often the incredible. Men seemed to have thought the higher they soared, the more important they should appear, and that the common life which they then lived was a thing too contemptible to merit imitation. Hence it followed, that it was not till this common life was rendered respectable by more refined and polished manners, that men thought it might be copied, so as to gain them applause. Even in Greece itself, tragedy had attained its maturity many years before comedy, as may be seen by comparing the age of Sophocles and Euripides, with that of Philemon and Menander."

‡ "Eupolis, Cratinus, Aristophanes, and other old writers of comedy, used unbounded license in exposing the knave, the thief, the adulterer, the assassin, or any infamous character whomsoever."

must be owned, do not give a favorable opinion of the taste of the Athenians at this period of their highest national splendor. It is true, that we discern exquisite knowledge of human nature in these dramas, and that they have high value, as throwing light on the manners and customs of the Athenians, and even on their political constitution. But there are coarseness of sentiment and nudity of expression in the comedies of Aristophanes, which to modern taste and manners appear extremely disgusting. We must presume, that even in the days of the author, such performances could have been relished only by the very dregs of the populace; and that what chiefly recommended them to these, was the malicious sarcasm and abuse which was thrown upon their superiors, often the best and worthiest members of the commonwealth.

To the old comedy—of which the extreme license and scurrility became at length disgusting, as the manners of the Athenians became more refined—succeeded the middle comedy, which, retaining the spirit of the old, and its vigorous delineation of manners and characters, banished from the drama all personal satire or abuse of living characters by name. The writers of this class were numerous, and we have several fragments remaining of their compositions, but no entire pieces. Of these fragments, Mr. Cumberland has published some valuable specimens, admirably translated, in the sixth volume of *The Observer*. Of these specimens, the passages taken from the comedies of Alexis, Antiphanes, Epicrates, Mnesimachus, Parmiscides, and Timocles, will give pleasure to every reader of taste.

Last came the *new comedy* of the Greeks, including in point of time a period of about thirty years—from the death of Alexander the Great, to the death of Menander, the last and, perhaps, the greatest ornament of the Grecian drama. In this short period, the Athenian stage was truly a school of morals; and while comedy lost none of her characteristic excellence in the just delineation of manners, she had the additional graces of tenderness, elegance, and decorum. Of this brilliant era, the chief dramatic writers were Menander, Philemon, Diphilus, Apollodorus, Philippides, and Posidippus.

In the comedies of Menander was found a vein of the most refined wit and pleasantry, which never transgressed the bounds of decency and strict morality. His object was at once the exemplary display of the charms of virtue, and the chastisement of vice; and employing, alternately, the grave and the jocose, attempering moral example with keen but elegant satire, he exhibited the most instructive as well as the justest representations of human nature. Quintilian and Plutarch * have deservedly enlarged on the

* Quint. l. x. c. i., and Plutarch. Comp. Aristoph. and Menand.

merits of this excellent dramatic poet, expressing their opinion, that he has eclipsed the reputation of all the other writers in the same department among the ancients. By the former of these authors, the plays of Menander are recommended, as a school of eloquence for the formation of a perfect orator; so admirable is the skill of the poet, in painting the manners and passions in every condition and circumstance of life. The eulogium of Menander, by Quintilian, might, in modern times, be held as no exaggerated character of our immortal *Shakspeare*. How much is it to be regretted, that of all the works of this great master of the ancient drama, of which there were near one hundred comedies, there should, unfortunately, remain nothing more than a few detached passages preserved by Athenæus, Plutarch, Stobæus, and Eustathius! Yet even these justify the high character which the ancient critics have given of this poet; and we have yet a complete and more ample proof of his merits in the comedies of Terence, which are now universally considered as little else than versions from Menander.*

Next in merit to Menander, and not inferior to him in fertility of genius, was Philemon, who is recorded to have written no less than ninety comedies. Of his remains, the few fragments preserved by Athenæus and Stobæus do not derogate from the character given of him by Quintilian and the ancient critics, as second, at least, in dramatical talents to the prince of the comic stage. In the same scale of merit stood Diphilus, of whom Clemens Alexandrinus and Eusebius give a high character in point of morals as well as comic humor. Of his works, as well as those of his rivals, Apollodorus, Philippides, and Posidippus, there remain a few fragments.

Time has happily spared to us more considerable remains of the tragic muse of the Greeks than of the comic, and fortunately those pieces which have been preserved, are the production of the three great ornaments of the drama, Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. Among the celebrated tragic poets, Æschylus ranks first in priority of time. Seventy years had only elapsed since the days of Thespis, when the Greek drama had no other stage for its exhibition than a wagon. The improvement that took place from that period, to the time when Æschylus produced those pieces which were crowned at the Olympic games, must have been great indeed. This author is said to have written sixty-six tragedies, for thirteen of which he gained the first prize in that department of poetry. The tragedies of Æschylus abound in strokes of the true sublime; but his genius, not always regulated

* Mr. Cumberland, in the Observer, No. 149, has translated some of the fragments of Menander with great spirit and sufficient fidelity, as also one of Diphilus.

by good taste, frequently betrays him into the bombast: *Sublimis —gravis—et grandiloquus usque ad vitium*, says Quinctilian. He studied not in his compositions that regularity of plan, and strict observance of the unities, which the works of the succeeding poets seem to have rendered essential to the Greek drama: but to this very circumstance we are indebted for the wild and romantic nature of his plots, and that terrible grandeur with which his characters are sometimes delineated. The high esteem which Aristophanes had for the talents of Æschylus, is demonstrated by that dispute which in his comedy entitled "The Frogs," he feigns to have taken place in the infernal regions between Euripides and Æschylus for the tragic chair. Bacchus, the judge of the controversy, gives a direct decision in favor of Æschylus: and Sophocles acquiesces in the judgment, and declares that though he himself is ready to contest the palm with Euripides, he yields it willingly to Æschylus.

Euripides and Sophocles were about fifty years posterior in time to Æschylus, though both of them had begun their dramatic career in his lifetime. The judgment of the critics, both of ancient and of modern times, is almost equally balanced between these great masters of the drama. Quinctilian leaves the question undecided with respect to their poetical merits; but prefers Euripides, as affording a better practical model of oratory, as well as on the score of his admirable, prudential, and moral lessons. Euripides is a great master of the passions, and with high skill in the excitement of the grander emotions of terror, rage, and madness, is yet more excellent in exciting the tender affections of grief and pity. In the judgment of Longinus, this poet had not a natural genius for the sublime; though the critic acknowleges that he is capable at times, when the subject demands it, of working himself up to a very high elevation, both of thought and expression. This criticism is certainly fastidious in no small degree. If a poet has it in his power to rise to the sublime when his subject demands it, what better proof can we have of a natural genius for the sublime? But how absurd to deny that the *Medea* is the work of a transcendent native genius for the sublime! As a moralist, Euripides ranks perhaps the highest among the ancient poets. He was the only dramatic writer of whom Socrates deigned to attend the representations. The singular esteem in which Cicero held him as a moral writer, he has strongly expressed in one of his letters to Tiro,* and it is a remarkable anecdote, that Cicero, in the last moments of his life, when assassinated in his litter, was occupied in reading the *Medea*. It is well known, that that great and good man expected his fate; and we must thence conclude that he thought no preparation for death more suitable than the excellent

* Cic. Ep. ad Fam. lib. xvi. ep. 8.

moral reflections of his favorite poet. Of seventy-five tragedies written by Euripides, there remain to us nineteen, and the fragment of a twentieth. Quintilian justly gives it as a decisive proof of the high merit of this great dramatist, that Menander admired, and followed him as his model, though in a different species of the drama.*

Contemporary with Euripides was his great rival, Sophocles, who, in the judgment both of the ancient and modern critics, shares equally with the former the chief honors of the tragic muse. As the principal excellence of Euripides is judged to be in the expression of the tender passions, so the genius of Sophocles has been thought more adapted to the grand, the terrible, and the sublime. Yet the latter has occasionally shown himself a great master in the pathetic. I know not that either the ancient or the modern drama can produce a passage more powerfully affecting, than the speech of Electra on receiving the urn which she is told contains the ashes of her brother Orestes:

*Ω φιλτάτε μνημεῖον ἀνθρώπων ἐμοί*, &c.
Soph. Elect., Act iv.

We perceive in the tragedies of Sophocles great knowledge of the human heart, together with a simplicity and chastity of expression in the general language of the characters, which greatly heightens his occasional strokes of the sublime. Of all the productions of the Greek stage which time has spared to us, that which is generally esteemed the most perfect is the Œdipus of Sophocles. There could not, perhaps, be devised a dramatic fable more perfectly suited to the excitement both of terror and pity than that of the unfortunate Œdipus; yet it is defective in one great point, which is a moral. There is no useful truth inculcated by the spectacle of a man reduced to the utmost pitch of human misery, and marked out as an object of the indignation and vengeance of the gods, for actions in which it is not possible to accuse him of criminality. I have formerly taken notice of this strange paradox in the ideas of the ancients with respect to morality,† and I will not repeat the observation.

The manner in which the dramatic compositions of the Greeks were performed has afforded much matter for learned inquiry, and given room to considerable diversity of opinion. It is well known that the ancient actors, both in the Greek and Roman theatres, wore masks suited to the characters they represented, of which the enlarged and distended features were calculated to be seen at a great distance; and the mouth was so constructed as to increase

* Hunc et admiratus maximé est, ut sæpe testatur, et secutus quamquam in opere diverso, Menander. Just. Or. l. x. c. 1.
† Supra, book i., ch. 8.

the sound of the voice like a speaking-trumpet. The tragic declamation was loud, sonorous, and inflated, while the tone of the comic actors was meant to be the medium of ordinary discourse. The ancient tragedy may indeed be described, not as an imitation of nature, but as altogether an artificial composition, intended to produce a grand and imposing effect by the united power of music, dancing, strong and expressive gesticulation, and pompous declamation; the whole introduced through the medium of some interesting, but simple story, fitted by its nature to excite powerfully the emotions of terror and of pity. The ancient comedy, with the accompaniments of music and dancing, was an imitation of ordinary life, intended to inculcate good morals by just delineations of the laughable or faulty characters of mankind, as the more serious dramas of Menander and Terence; or to chastise vice by the rude methods of satire, burlesque, and invective, as the comedies of Aristophanes and Plautus.

As the tragic and comic dramas were thus different in their nature, they were usually performed by different classes of actors.* Quintilian tells us that Æsopus declaimed much more gravely than Roscius, because the former was accustomed to act tragedy, and the latter comedy.† The dresses and decorations in the two species of drama were likewise altogether different. The tragic actor used the *cothurnus*, or high-soled buskin, which increased his height some inches, and also a stuffed dress to give a proportional size and breadth to the figure.‡ The comic actor trod the stage with the *soccus*, or low-heeled slipper, and an ordinary garb suited to the character in real life. It was therefore corresponding to their figures that the former declaimed in a loud and solemn tone, or mouthed his part, while the latter spoke in a natural tone and manner: *Comædus sermocinatur*, says Apuleius. *Tragœdus vociferatur.*

There are some circumstances regarding the exhibition of the ancient drama, on which the modern critics are not agreed. There is good reason to believe that both the comedy and tragedy of the Greeks and Romans were set to music, and the greater part, if not the whole, sung by the actors, or spoken in musical intonation,

* Plato, 3 Dial. de Republ.

† Roscius citatior, Æsopus gravior fuit; quod ille comœdias, hic tragœdias egit.—Just. Or., lib. xi., c. 3.

‡ Lucian gives a most ludicrous picture of the costume of the tragic actors and their turgid manner of performance, in his dialogue on stage dancing.—*Περι Ορχησεως.* "What more absurd and ridiculous spectacle can there be, than to see a man artfully drawing out his figure to a most unnatural length, stalking in upon high shoes, his head covered with a fearful masque, with a mouth gaping wide, as if he was about to devour the spectators; not to mention his stuffed belly and chest, extended to give the long figure a proportional size; then his bellowing and ranting, sometimes blustering and thumping, then singing iambics, or musically whining out the most grievous calamities.'

like the recitative of the modern Italian operas. Not to mention the etymology of the words *cantare* and *recitare*, plainly denoting the composition to be of the nature of song, there are many passages of the ancient authors which countenance the foregoing opinion.*

The ancient actors used in their performance a great deal of gesticulation, which was required, from the immense size of their theatres, in order to supply the defect of the voice, which, even with the contrivance before mentioned to increase its sound, was still too weak to be distinctly heard over so large a space. A violent and strongly marked gesticulation was, therefore, in some degree, necessary; and this led to a very extraordinary practice in the latter period of the Roman theatre: namely, that there were two persons employed in the representation of one character. Livy, the historian, relates the particular accident which gave rise to this practice. The poet Livius Andronicus, in acting upon the stage in one of his own plays, was called by the plaudits of the audience to repeat some favorite passages so frequently, that his voice became inaudible through hoarseness; and he requested that a boy might be allowed to stand in front of the musicians, and recite the part, while he himself performed the consonant gesticulation. It was remarked, says the historian, that his action was much more free and forcible, from being relieved of the labor of utterance: and hence it became customary, adds Livy, to allow this practice in monologues, or soliloquies, and to require both voice and gesture from the same actor only in the colloquial parts. We have it on the authority of Lucian, that the same practice came to be introduced upon the Greek stage. Formerly, says that author, the same actors both recited and gesticulated; but as it was observed that the continual motion, by affecting the breathing of the actor, was an impediment to distinct recitation, it was judged better to make one actor recite and another gesticulate. For farther information on this matter I refer to a very ingenious and ample disquisition by the Abbe Du Bos in his *Reflections Critiques sur la Poësie et sur la Peinture*. Tom. i. sect. 42.

In treating of the Greek drama, it would be an omission not to mention a species of dramatic composition—of a nature very much inferior to the proper tragedy and comedy of the ancients; but which, at length, in the corruption of taste, became greatly in fashion both among the Greeks and Romans, and seems, indeed, to have been carried to as high a degree of perfection as the

* Suetonius, in speaking of the Emperor Nero, who piqued himself on his talents as a player, and used frequently to exhibit on the stage, says, "*Tragœdias quoque cantavit personatus. Inter cætera cantavit Canacen parturientem* (a strange part for his imperial majesty to perform!) *Orestem matricidam, Œdipodem excæcatum, Herculem insanum.*" Some of these characters, it must be allowed, were sufficiently consonant to their actor.

nature of the composition would admit of. What I speak of is the *mimes* and *pantomimes*. The etymology of the words shows that this species of entertainment was considered as a sort of mimicry or ludicrous imitation. The *mimes* originally made a part of the ancient comedy, and the mimic actors played or exhibited grotesque dances between the acts of the comedy. As this entertainment was highly relished, the mimes began to rest on their own merits, and setting themselves up in opposition to the comedians, delighted the vulgar by making burlesque parodies on the more regular representations of the stage. Some of these pieces were published, and were of such merit as humorous compositions, that the philosopher Favorinus did not disdain to confess his admiration of them.

The pantomimes differed from the mimes in this respect, that they consisted solely of gesticulation, and seem to have been very nearly of the same character with our modern pantomimes. What is termed in France the Italian comedy, seems, on the other hand, to hold a very strict affinity with the ancient mimes. Both the one and the other, if we may judge from the name, were of Greek origin; but they were introduced into Rome towards the end of the commonwealth—and, as the spectacle was greatly relished, the art was proportionably cultivated and improved. The performances became gradually more refined and chaste; and that which was at first little better than low buffoonery, began at last to aspire at the merits of the higher drama, tragedy and comedy. The tragedy of Œdipus was in the reign of Augustus performed at Rome by the pantomimes in dumb show, and that so admirably as to draw tears from the whole spectators. The chief actors in this department were Pylades and Bathyllus; and the contentions excited by the partisans of these mimics arose at length to such a pitch, that Augustus thought proper to admonish Pylades in private, and caution him to live on good terms with his rival, for the sake of the public peace. Pylades contented himself with replying, that it was for the emperor's best interest, that the public should find nothing more material to engross their thoughts than him and Bathyllus. The chief merit of Pylades, as Athenæus informs us, lay in the comic pantomime, and that of Bathyllus in the tragic. But however great the perfection to which these performances were carried by the ancients, they were always regarded as a spurious species of the drama, indicating the corruption of a more liberal art.*

The genius of the Greeks was in no department of literary com-

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* Lucian is a warm apologist of the art of pantomime in his dialogue *Περὶ Ὀρχήσεως*. And his contemporary, Apuleius, has given, in his florid style of writing, an amusing account of an ancient pantomime on the subject of the Judgment of Paris. Metamorph. l. x.

position more distinguished than in history. In attending to the progress of the arts and sciences, it has been generally remarked that there are particular ages in which the human mind seems to take a strong bent or direction to one class of pursuits in preference to all others. Emulation may in a great measure account for this: for when one artist or one learned man becomes confessedly eminent, others are excited by a natural bias to the same studies and pursuits in which he has attained reputation. In treating of the fine arts among the Greeks, we remarked that extraordinary constellation of eminent artists which adorned the age of Pericles. We shall observe a similar phenomenon in the age of Leo the Tenth. In like manner we find the oldest of the Greek historians all nearly contemporary with each other. Herodotus, the most ancient of the Greek historians of merit, died 413 years before the Christian era; Thucydides 391 before that period; and Xenophon was about twenty years younger than Thucydides.

Herodotus, a native of Halicarnassus, one of the Greek cities of Asia, has written the joint history of the Greeks and Persians, from the time of Cyrus the Great [599 B. C.] to the battles of Platæa and Mycale, a period of 120 years.* He treats incidentally likewise of the history of several other nations—of the Egyptians, Assyrians, Medes, and Lydians. His account of Egypt, in particular, is extremely minute and curious. He had travelled into that country, and besides what he relates from actual knowledge and observation, he was at much pains to obtain from the priests every degree of information they could give him of the antiquities and of the manners and customs of the country. He likewise visited the greatest part of Greece, travelling thence into Thrace and Scythia; and in Asia he made a journey to Babylon and Tyre, and the most considerable places in Syria and Palestine. With the object of writing his history, he seems to have been most solicitous to collect information from every quarter; and it is his greatest fault that he has not been sufficiently scrupulous in his admission of many idle and absurd anecdotes, which he had too much good sense to believe, and yet thought not unworthy of being recorded. It is true, that for the most part he puts the reader on his guard in such matters as he considers to be either palpably fabulous or not sufficiently authenticated; but the dignity of history is debased even by the admission of such matter, under whatever caution it is presented. It is not to be denied, however, that the merits of Herodotus are of no common degree. When we consider him as the earliest writer of regular history among the ancients whose works have been preserved; while we

* Herodotus gives a very brief detail of the preceding period, from the reign of Gyges, king of Lydia (718 B. C.) to the birth of Cyrus: but the history properly commences with Cyrus

observe the valuable and instructive detail which we find in him, and in no other historian, and remark that the subsequent writers of reputation have rested for many material facts on his authority; while we attend to the unaffected ease and simplicity of his narrative, the graceful flow of his style, and even the charm of his antiquated [illegible]—there is perhaps no historian of antiquity who deserves a higher estimation.* Several of the ancient writers have [illegible] the character of Herodotus in point of veracity: but none in such severe terms as Plutarch, who has written a pretty long dissertation, expressly to show the want of faith and the malignity of the historian. The fact is, that Plutarch bore strong family ag[illegible] Herodotus for a supposed aspersion cast by that historian on the fame of his country. Herodotus had related that, in the expedition of Xerxes, the Thebans, apprehensive of the fate of their own territory, deserted the common cause and joined the Persians. The fact was true; but Plutarch, who was a native of Chæronea, one of the Theban states, could not bear this imputation on his country, and wreaked his spleen on the historian in the treatise before mentioned. The facts which he instances are in general very trifling, and are chiefly such stories as the historian owns he has related on dubious authority. Herodotus is said to have recited history to the Greeks assembled at the solemn festival of the *Panathenaia*, or, as others say, at the Olympic games—an expedient for the good policy of which Lucian gives him credit, as there could be no means half so speedy of making known his genius and circulating his reputation. Those public recitations had an admirable effect. It was this display of the talents of Herodotus and the fame which attended it, that kindled the enthusiasm of genius in the young Thucydides.

Thucydides was a native of Athens, and of an illustrious family; being allied, by the female line, to the kings of Thrace, and by the male, a descendant from Cimon and Miltiades. A contemporary, and familiarly acquainted with many of the most remarkable men of his country, with Socrates, Plato, Pericles, Alcibiades, it was no wonder that he felt the noble emulation of raising himself a name in future ages. He was bred to the profession of arms, and distinguished himself honorably, in the beginning of the war of Peloponnesus; but having miscarried in an attempt to relieve Amphipolis, then blockaded by the Lacedæmonians, he was banished, on that account, from his country, for the space of twenty years. He retired to the island of Ægina, and employed the long period of his exile in composing his history of the Peloponnesian war, of the progress and detail of which, besides his own personal knowledge, he spared no pains to obtain

* In Herodoto, cum omnia, (ut ego quidem sentio,) leniter fluunt, tum ipsa διάλεκτος habet eam jucunditatem ut latentes etiam numeros complexa videatu. —Quint. de Just. Or. lib. ix. c. 4.

the most accurate information. Introductory to his principal subject he gives a short view of the Grecian history, from the departure of Xerxes, to the commencement of the war of Peloponnesus, which connects his history with that of Herodotus: but he brings down the detail of the war only to the twenty-first year. The history of the remaining six years was written by Theopompus and Xenophon.

Thucydides is deservedly esteemed for the authenticity of his facts, his impartiality, and fidelity. We are, indeed, involuntarily led from his narrative to favor the cause of his countrymen, the Athenians; of whom, however, it may be presumed, he had no reason to exaggerate the merits. The style of Thucydides is a contrast to that of Herodotus. The eloquence of the latter is copious and diffuse, and his expression, ever rising to the elevated and magnificent, is chiefly remarkable for its simplicity and perspicuity. The former has a closeness and energy of style, which is equally lively and energetic.* Like Tacitus, he rises often to great sublimity of expression, and, like that writer too, his diction is so compressed, that we find, often, as many ideas as there are words.† His narrative does not convey his meaning easily, and without effort. He makes the reader pause upon his sentences, and keeps his attention on the stretch to apprehend the full import of his expressions. That effort of attention, however, is always amply rewarded, by the wisdom and sagacity of his observations, the intimate knowledge he shows of his subject, and the perfect confidence which he inspires of his own candor and veracity.

There is no other among the Greek writers who has shone more in the department of history, than Xenophon. This author was about thirty years younger than Thucydides; contemporary with many of the most illustrious men of Greece; and educated in the school of Socrates. He accompanied the younger Cyrus in his war against his brother Artaxerxes, and in the latter part of that expedition, commanded the Greek army in the service of Cyrus. We know the fatal issue of that enterprise, in which Cyrus fell by the hand of his brother;—a just reward for his unnatural and criminal ambition.‡ The retreat of the ten thousand Greeks, under Xenophon, gave him great fame as an able commander, eminently endowed with persevering courage, fertile in resources,

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* Densus et brevis, et semper instans sibi Thucydides, dulcis et candidus et fusus Herodotus: ille commutatis, hic remissis affectibus melior; ille concitatus, hic sermonibus: ille vi, hic voluptate.—*Quintil.* l. x. c. i.

† Thucydides omnes dicendi artificio meâ sententiâ facile vicit, ut verborum prope numerum sententiarum numero consequatur. ita porro verbis aptus et pressus, ut nescias utrum res oratione, an verba sententiis illustrentur.—*Cicero*, lib. 2. De Orat.

‡ See supra, book ii. chap. 2.

and possessing that happy talent of address, and that popular eloquence, which are fitted for gaining the ready obedience and the confidence of an army. The narrative of this remarkable expedition, written by himself, has justly entitled him to a high rank among the historians of antiquity.* His historical, political, and philosophical works are numerous.† Among these, one of the most known, though certainly not of the highest merit, is the *Cyropædia*, or Education of Cyrus; a fanciful composition, which blends history and romance, and is equally unsatisfying in the one point of view as in the other. It is supposed that the author meant to exhibit the picture of an accomplished prince. But if that was his aim, to what purpose those frivolous and childish tales of the nursery, those insipid jests, and that endless verbiage and haranguing upon the most ordinary and trifling occasions?

Xenophon was a man of strict virtue and probity, of strong religious sentiments, referring all to the watchful administration of the Deity, but prone to the superstitious belief of auguries and omens. As a writer, in point of style, he is a model of easy, smooth, and unaffected composition; and his pure Attic dialect has infinite grace, and a singular perspicuity or transparency of expression, which presents the thought at once to the reader's mind, and leaves him no leisure to attend to the medium through which it is conveyed:—a supreme excellence of style, and rare, because ignorantly undervalued, in competition with point, brilliancy and rhetorical embellishment. *Quid ego commemorem* (says Quintilian) *Xenophontis jucunditatem illam inaffectatam, sed quam nulla possit affectatio consequi—ut ipsae finxisse sermonem Gratiae videantur?* ‡

The three historians I have mentioned had the fortune to live in that age which witnessed the highest national glory of their country. But Greece, even in the days of her degeneracy as a nation, produced some historians of uncommon merit. Polybius lived in the second century before the birth of Christ; at the time when the only surviving spirit of the Greeks was that which animated the small states of Achaia. His father, a native of Megalopolis in Arcadia, was Prætor of the Achæan republic, and executed that important office with great honor. Polybius was trained from his youth to public affairs, for which his abilities emi-

* See supra, book ii. chap. 2.

† He wrote, besides the Anabasis and the Cyropædia, a continuation, in seven books, of the Greek history of Thucydides; a Panegyric on Agesilaus; two treatises on the Lacedæmonian and Athenian Republics; The Apology for Socrates; and four books of the *Memorabilia* of that philosopher; a treatise on Domestic Economy; The Banquet; Hiero, or the Economy of a Monarchy; besides some smaller essays on Imposts, Hunting, Horsemanship, and some Epistles of which we have only fragments.

‡ "Why should I mention that unaffected sweetness in Xenophon, which no affectation could ever reach—so that the Graces themselves seem to have modelled his composition?"

nently qualified him. He accompanied his father on an embassy to the court of the Ptolemies in Egypt, and afterwards went himself as ambassador to Rome, where he resided for several years. During that period he employed himself most assiduously in the study of the antiquities, laws, and customs of the Romans: and having permission from the senate to search into the records preserved in the capitol, obtained a more exact and profound acquaintance with the history and constitution of the Roman republic than any of its own citizens. It was probably by the advice of the great Scipio and Lælius, who were his intimate friends, that he formed the splendid design of composing a history of Rome, which should comprehend that of all the contemporary nations with which the affairs of the republic were connected. Preparatory, however, to this great undertaking, he resolved to travel into every country where lay the scene of any of those events he designed to record. In that view he visited most of the southern nations of Europe, a considerable part of Asia, and the coast of Africa. He explored himself the traces of Hannibal in his march across the Alps, and made himself acquainted with all the Gallic nations in their vicinity. In short, no writer was ever more scrupulous in the investigation of facts, or more perfectly acquainted with the scenes he had to describe. Thus his history is deservedly of the very highest authority among the compositions of the ancients. It is much to be lamented that so small a portion should remain of so valuable a work. Of forty books which he wrote, beginning from the commencement of the second Punic war, and carried down to the reduction of Macedonia into a Roman province, we have only the first five books entire, and extracts, or rather an abridgment, of the following twelve, with some detached fragments from the remaining books preserved by other writers. We see in every page of Polybius, the intelligent officer, the sagacious politician, and the man of probity and candor. He neither disguises the virtues of an enemy, nor palliates the faults of a friend. His description of military operations is clear and distinct, and his judgment is every where conspicuous in reasoning on the counsels which directed all public measures, and the causes which led to their success or failure. The style of Polybius has, indeed, no claim to the praise of eloquence. Dionysius of Halicarnassus reproaches him with carelessness in the choice of his expressions, and inattention to the rules of good writing: but he is every where perspicuous, and the sterling value of his matter abundantly compensates for his defects in point of rhetorical composition.

The next who deserves to be mentioned among the Greek historians of eminence, is Diodorus Siculus, who, in the latter period of the commonwealth and in the age of Augustus, composed at Rome his excellent General History, a work of thirty years' labor, of which only fifteen out of forty books have been preserved. The first five books relate to the fabulous periods, but record

likewise a great deal of curious historical matter relative to the antiquities of the Egyptians, Assyrians, Persians, and Greeks. The next two books are wanting. The eleventh book begins with the expulsion of Xerxes into Greece, and contains the Grecian history, and that of the contemporary nations, down to the age of Alexander the Great. The author is particularly ample on the affairs of the Romans and Carthaginians. The work of Diodorus appears to have been in great esteem with the writers of antiquity. The elder Pliny is high in his commendation; Justin Martyr ranks him among the most illustrious of the Greek historians; and Eusebius places greater weight on his authority than that of any other writer. The modern writers have blamed him for chronological inaccuracy. It is not to be denied that the History of Diodorus is replete with valuable matter, and that his style, though not to be compared to that of Xenophon or Thucydides, is pure, perspicuous, and free from all affectation.

Dionysius of Halicarnassus deserves to be ranked among the most eminent of the Greek writers of history, both in regard to the importance of his matter and the merit of his style, which, though deficient in simplicity, is often extremely eloquent. Dionysius came to Rome in the reign of Augustus, and continuing to reside there twenty-two years, employed that time in the most diligent research into the ancient records, in conversation with the most learned men of that age, and in the perusal of the older writers, whence he collected the materials of that most valuable work which he composed in twenty books, entitled *Roman Antiquities*.* Of these only the first eleven books have been preserved, in which the origin and foundation of the Roman state are treated with great amplitude, and the history of the republic brought down to the end of the decemvirate. He has been censured for dealing in the marvellous; but the censure applies equally to Livy, who has repeated the same stories, without, it is probable, either believing them himself or expecting his readers to do so. Those who write of the origin of nations have but scanty materials of genuine history, and are thus tempted to eke them out with the popular fables. And these it is sometimes important to know, as they have frequently given rise to ceremonies and customs both of a religious and civil nature, of which the origin may therefore be considered as belonging to authentic history. The point in which Dionysius is more justly to be blamed is his fondness for system, and the desire he has to persuade his readers of his own sagacity in discovering, as he imagines, a deep and refined policy in the founders of the Roman state, in all those constitutional regulations regarding the powers and rights of the

* He gives, in the Introduction to his work, an ample account of all the sources of information from which his history is compiled.

different orders, the functions of the magistrates, &c., which in reality could only have arisen gradually and progressively, as circumstances pointed out and required them. Of this error of Dionysius, I shall have another occasion to take some notice.

There are few of the ancient historians who deserve a higher rank in the estimation of the moderns than Arrian, whose history of the expedition of Alexander is the most authentic narrative we have of the exploits of that great conqueror, as he is also the best expositor of the real motives and designs of that extraordinary man, of whose policy such opposite judgments have been formed. The narrative of Arrian, as he informs us in his preface, is founded on the accounts given by two of Alexander's principal officers, Aristobulus and Ptolemy Lagus, afterwards the sovereign of Egypt. No historical record, therefore, has a better claim to the public faith. The brief account of India by Arrian, which includes the curious journal of Nearchus's voyage, is likewise extremely interesting and instructive. The style of Arrian formed on that of Xenophon, is a very happy imitation of that author's simplicity, purity, and precision. Arrian's merits are not solely those of an accurate and able historian; he was likewise a profound philosopher. It is to his writings that we owe all our knowledge of the sublime morality of Epictetus, of whom he was the favorite disciple, and has diligently recorded the philosophical lessons and maxims of his master. The short treatise entitled the Enchiridion of Epictetus, which is a complete epitome of the stoical morality, was written by Arrian, and, from its beautiful precision, is perhaps on the whole a more valuable memorial of that great philosopher than the four books which Arrian has collected of his discourses.

The last author I shall mention of those properly to be classed among the Greek historians is Plutarch, and perhaps there is no writer of antiquity of equal value in point of important matter and useful information. Plutarch was a Bœotian by birth, a native of Chæronea, a small state of which his father was chief magistrate, with the title of Archon. He was borne in the 48th year of the Christian era, under the reign of the emperor Claudius. In his youth he travelled into Egypt, and while in that country, studied under Ammonius, a celebrated teacher of philosophy at Alexandria. Returning thence into Greece, he visited all the schools of the philosophers in that country; and, finally, with a mind replete with useful knowledge and an extensive acquaintance with men and manners, he repaired to Rome, for the purpose of examining the public records and collecting materials for the lives of the illustrious men of Italy and Greece. The reputation he had acquired as a man of great erudition procured him the acquaintance, of all the learned, and introduced him to the notice of the emperor Trajan, who honored him with high marks of his favor and friendship, and conferred on him the proconsular government of Illyria. A public life, however, was irksome to Plutarch,

whose chief enjoyment lay in the pursuits of literature and philosophy. He returned, after the death of Trajan, to his native city of Chæronea, where he passed the remaining years of a long life in discharging the office of its chief magistrate, in the composition of his excellent writings, and in the continual practice of all the active and social virtues. The lives of Illustrious Men, written by Plutarch, must upon the whole be ranked among the most valuable works which remain to us of the ancients. He is the only author who introduces us to an intimate and familiar acquaintance with those great men, whose public exploits and political characters we find indeed in other historians, but of whose individual features as men, and of their manners as domestic, private, and social intercourse, we should be utterly ignorant, were it not for his descriptive paintings, and the truly characteristic anecdotes which he records of them. What, if at times the biographer is chargeable with a little garrulity, and a too scrupulous minuteness in the detail of circumstances not of the highest importance? So natural is the desire felt by the ingenious mind of knowing every thing that concerns a great and illustrious character, that we can much more easily forgive the writer who is cheerfully lavish of the information he has collected, and at times descends even to trifling particulars, than him who, from a proud feeling of the dignity of authorship, is fastidiously sparing of his stores, and disdains to be ranked among the collectors of anecdote.

A great charm of Plutarch's writings is the admirable vein of morality which pervades all his compositions. Every sentiment proceeds from the heart, and forcibly persuades the reader of the amiable candor, worth, and integrity of the writer. While his biographical details contain the most valuable part of the ancient history of Greece and Rome, his moral writings include the sum of all the ancient ethics. Perhaps it was no exaggerated estimate of his merits made by Theodore Gaza, when he declared that if every trace of ancient learning was to perish, and he had it in his power to preserve one single book from the works of the profane writers, his choice would fall upon Plutarch.

The style of this author, though, in the judgment of the best critics, neither polished nor pure, is at all times energetic; and, on those occasions when the subject demands it, rises frequently to great eloquence.

An ancient Greek epigram of Agathias records the high esteem which the Roman people entertained for this excellent writer, in erecting a statue to his honor.*

* The epigram is thus translated by Dryden:

"Bœotian Plutarch, to thy deathless praise
Does martial Rome this graceful statue raise;
Because both Greece and she thy fame have shared,
Their heroes written, and their lives compared.
But thou thyself could never write thy own;
Their lives have *parallels*, but thine has none."

## CHAPTER IX.

GREEK PHILOSOPHY—Ionic Sect.—Thales—Anaximander—Anaximenes—Anaxagoras—Italic Sect—Pythagoras—Empedocles, &c.—Eleatic Sect—Zeno—Leucippus—Democritus—Heraclitus—Socrates—Cyrenaic Sect—Aristippus—Cynics—Diogenes—Megaric Sect—Plato—Peripatetics—Aristotle—Skeptics—Pyrrho—Stoics—Epicureans—Reflections.

I HAVE already remarked that one considerable effect of the public games and festivals of the Greeks was the propagation and advancement of the literary spirit. The Olympic and other solemn games of the Greeks were not only the field of martial and athletic exercises, but of the contests for the palm of literature. Those immense assemblies were the stated resort of the poets, the historians, the rhapsodists, and even the philosophers.

After the days of Homer and Hesiod, the increasing relish for poetical composition gave rise to a set of men termed *rhapsodists*, whose original employment was to travel from one city to another, frequenting public entertainments and solemn festivals, and reciting the works of the poets which they had committed to memory. As the early poets were the first teachers of the sciences, those rhapsodists became commentators on their works, and expositors of their doctrines. The youth, who resorted to them for instruction, dignified their masters with the title of Sophists or professors of wisdom, and these sophists soon became the founders of different sects or schools of philosophy.

The history of the ancient philosophy, if we consider how small a portion it embraced of useful knowledge, and yet how ardent the zeal of its teachers, and how keen the controversies of the different sects, affords on the whole a mortifying picture of the caprice and weakness of the human mind: but on these very accounts, no subject of contemplation is more fitted to subdue in man those arrogant ideas of his own abilities, and of the all-sufficiency of his intellectual powers to subject the whole phenomena both of the natural and moral world to his limited reason and understanding.

The most ancient school of philosophy was that founded by Thales of Miletus, about 640 years before the Christian era, and termed the Ionic sect, from the country of its founder. Thales is said to have learned great part of his knowledge in Egypt, as the ancients were fond of attributing the rudiments of all wisdom to that happy quarter. He became celebrated for his knowledge in

geometry and astronomy: but the former of these sciences must be supposed to have been at that time in mere infancy, when one of Thales's discoveries is said to have been, that all right lines passing through the centre of a circle divide it into two equal parts. Yet Thales made some bold and fortunate conjectures in the science of astronomy. He conjectured this earth to be a sphere, and that it revolved round the sun. He believed the fixed stars to be so many suns encircled with other planets like our earth: he believed the moon's light to be a reflection of the sun's from a solid surface: and if we may trust the testimony of ancient authors, he was able to calculate eclipses, and actually predicted that famous eclipse of the sun 601 years before the birth of Christ, which separated the armies of the Medes and Lydians at the moment of an engagement. The metaphysical opinions of Thales are but imperfectly known. He supposed the world to be framed by the Deity out of the original element of water, and animated by his essence as the body is by the soul; that the Deity therefore resided in every portion of space: and that this world was only a great temple, where the sight of every thing around him reminded man of that Great Being which inhabited and pervaded it.* As a specimen of the moral doctrines of Thales we have the following excellent opinions and precepts: "Neither the crimes of bad men, nor even their thoughts are concealed from the gods. Health of body, a moderate fortune, and a cultivated mind, are the chief ingredients of happiness. Parents may expect from their children that obedience which they themselves paid to their parents. Stop the mouth of slander by prudence. Take care not to commit the same fault yourself, which you censure in others." †

The disciples of the ancient philosophers frequently made bold innovations on the doctrines of their masters. Anaximander, the disciple and successor of Thales, who first committed the tenets of the Ionic school to writing, taught that all things are in a state of continual change; that there is a constant succession of worlds: and that while some are daily tending to dissolution, others are forming. Anaximander is said to have been the first constructor of the sphere, to have delineated the limits of the earth and sea, and to have invented the gnomon for pointing the hours by the shadow on the sun-dial. His contemporary Anaximenes, of the same school, believed the Divinity to reside in the air, which he likewise made to be the original and constituent principle of all the other elements.

The most intelligible and rational opinions of any philosopher of

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* Thales—homines existimare oportere, omnia quæ cernerent Deorum esse plena: fore enim omnes castiores, velutique in fanis essent, maxime religiosi.—Cic. de Nat. Deor. i. 2.

† Diog. Laert in Vita Thal.

this school were those of Anaxagoras; and, as deviating most from the vulgar errors and superstition, he was accused of impiety. He taught that the first efficient principle of all things was an immaterial and intelligent Being, existing from all eternity; that the *substratum*, or subject of his operations, was *matter*, which likewise existed from all eternity in a chaotic state, comprehending the confused rudiments of all different substances, which the intelligent mind of the Creator first separated, and then combined for the formation of the universe, and of all bodies, animate and inanimate. It is true that Thales propagated the doctrine of an eternal mind, the Creator and Ruler of the universe: but he, like most of the ancient philosophers, seemed to consider this mind as united to matter, which was animated by it, as the body is by the soul. Anaxagoras regarded the mind of the Creator to be altogether distinct from matter; incapable of being included in space or substance of any kind, and of a nature entirely pure and spiritual. But if the general principles of Anaxagoras's philosophy were correct and rational, when he came to particulars, his notions partook of the vulgar absurdities. He conjectured the stars to be stones, which the rapid movement of the ether had whirled up into the region of fire. The sun he supposed to be a mass of red-hot iron, somewhat bigger than the Peloponnesus; an opinion, we are told, which led to a charge of impiety, and was punished by sentence of banishment and a fine of five talents; though Pericles, who had been Anaxagoras's pupil, stood forth on that occasion as his defender. His successors of the Ionic school were Diogenes of Apollonia, and Archelaus; the latter, the master of Socrates, who thence, in strict arrangement, should be recorded among the philosophers of the Ionic sect; but as this great man made a signal revolution in philosophy, I delay to mention his doctrines and opinions, till I give a brief account of the notions of his predecessors.

Soon after the Ionic, arose the Italic sect, so termed from the country where Pythagoras, its founder, is said to have first taught. Pythagoras is generally believed to have been a native of Samos; but the time in which he flourished is quite uncertain. All that Brucker concludes, from comparing the different accounts, is, that his era may be placed somewhere between the forty-third and fifty-third Olympiad; that is to say near six centuries before the birth of Christ. Pythagoras travelled into Egypt, where he spent, as is said, no less than twenty-two years in the study of the sciences, as well as of the secret doctrines of the priests. After the invasion of that country by Cambyses, he was carried among the captives to Babylon, where he increased his stores of wisdom by the conversation of the magi. Thence he is said to have travelled into India, to acquaint himself with the doctrines of the Gymnosophists. Returning into his native country of Samos, he chose to escape the tyranny of its sovereign by migra-

ting into Italy, where he established a school at Crotona, and signally contributed, by his doctrines and example, to reform the manners of that dissolute city. In imitation of the Egyptian priests, Pythagoras professed two different kinds of doctrine, the one accommodated to vulgar use, and the other reserved for the private ear of his favourite disciples. The object of the former was morality; the latter consisted of many mysteries which we are probably at no loss for being very little acquainted with. Five years of silence were requisite for preparing his scholars for the participation of these secrets. These disciples formed among themselves a sort of community; they lived all in the same house together with their wives and children; they had their goods in common, and their time was parcelled out and appropriated to various exercises of mind and body. Music was in high esteem with them, as a corrective of the passions; and they had one kind of music for the morning, to awaken and excite the faculties, and another for the evening, to relax and compose them. The notion which Pythagoras inculcated of the soul's transmigration through different bodies, made his disciples strictly abstain from animal food. As a proof that Plutarch, though commonly regarded by the critics as an unpolished writer, was not destitute of eloquence, we might desire any one to read that short oration of his *περὶ σαρκοφαγίας*: an apology for the Pythagoreans abstaining from the flesh of animals, of which there is a beautiful paraphrase in the *Emile* of Rousseau; an address to the feelings which would almost make us believe ourselves monsters, for indulging an appetite so cruel and unnatural.

The main object of the philosophy of Pythagoras was to mortify and subdue the corporal part of our nature by a certain prescribed course of discipline, and thus to prepare and fit the intellectual part for its proper function, the search of immutable truth, the contemplation of the divine nature, and the nature of the human soul. The long silence enjoined to his disciples accustomed them to mental abstraction. The sciences of arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy, were sedulously cultivated: but whether as considered to be parts of the preparatory discipline, or as the objects of that discipline, seems to be a little uncertain. The latter would appear the more probable supposition, for this reason, that the philosopher taught that much mysterious and hidden truth was contained in certain arithmetical numbers and geometrical and musical proportions, which he communicated only to the higher and more advanced class of his disciples. Pythagoras regarded the human soul as consisting of two parts—the one a sensitive, which is common to man and the inferior animals; the other a rational and divine, which is common to man with the Deity, and is indeed a part of the divine nature. The first perishes with the body, of which it is an inseparable adjunct; the other survives and is immortal; but after the death of one body it enters into

another, and so passes through an endless series of transmigrations. It is punished by degradation into the body of an inferior animal, and thus suffers a temporary suspension of its rational and intellectual nature. It was this notion which led to abstinence from the flesh of animals. It is uncertain whether Pythagoras committed any of his doctrines to writing. What remains under his name is commonly believed to have been the writing of some of his disciples. The Golden Verses, on which Hierocles has written a commentary, and which contain the principal moral tenets of the Pythagorean philosophy, are, from the polished structure of the verse, evidently of a much later age than that of the philosopher. They have been attributed with some probability to Epicharmus, who lived about 440 B. C.

Of the Pythagorean or Italic sect, there were many philosophers of reputation:—among others, Empedocles of Agrigentum, who attained to considerable eminence in physical science, and who is said to have thrown himself into the crater of Mount Etna, either from the desire of exploring the cause of its eruptions, or of propagating the belief that the gods had caught him up into heaven; it is a wiser and more charitable supposition, that he owed his death to a laudable but rash curiosity. Epicharmus of Agrigentum, the supposed author of the *Aurea Carmina*, was likewise a teacher of the Pythagorean philosophy, and attempted to render its doctrine popular by introducing them to the public through the medium of the drama; a project which gave offence to the graver teachers of wisdom, but procured this philosopher a more extensive reputation; for his comedies were so excellent, that Plautus did not disdain to borrow from them. Archytas of Tarentum was likewise of the Pythagorean school. He is said to have suggested that division of the ten predicaments, which was afterwards adopted by Aristotle. It is as an able geometrician and astronomer that Horace has embalmed his memory and recorded his unhappy fate.

> "Te maris et terræ, numeroque carentis arenæ
> Mensorem cohibent, Archyta,
> Pulveris exigui prope litus parva matinum
> Munera, nec quicquam tibi prodest
> Aerias tentasse domos, animoque rotundum
> Percurrisse polum morituro." *
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> *Hor. Od.* l. i. 28.

He perished by shipwreck, in a voyage undertaken probably for the purpose of astronomical or geometrical discoveries. But the

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* "Close by the shore a span of earth contains,
Oh, mighty man of art! thy last, thy great remains;
Whose penetrating mind and skilful hands
Measured the heavens and earth, and numbered all the sands.
Vain is thy learning now; thy active soul
No more shall trace the stars, or travel to the pole."

*Bentley.*

most celebrated philosopher of the Pythagorean sect, of whose opinions we have the best information, because derived from his own writings, is Ocellus Lucanus. His treatise *Περὶ τῦ παντος*, or of the Universe, has come down to our times entire, and is a valuable monument of the philosophy of the ancients. His fundamental doctrines are the eternity of the mundane system, and its absolute perfection, so as to exclude the possibility of change from the failure or corruption of any of its parts. From this ancient philosophy, Aristotle and Plato have borrowed largely in their writings *on the nature of the universe*.

The Eleatic sect of philosophy, believed to have sprung from the Pythagorean or Italic, was founded by Xenophanes, about 500 years before Christ. It was called Eleatic because it owed its name chiefly to Parmenides, Zeno, and Leucippus, natives of Elea, a city of Æolia. The metaphysical doctrines of this sect, in so far as we can judge of them from the few fragments which have survived, and the notices of them found in the works of Aristotle, are perfectly unintelligible. They maintained that things had neither a beginning, an end, nor any change; that all the phenomena which we see of changes in the visible world are entirely in our own senses; and that of the real essence of things we have no perception, and therefore can attain to no knowledge: but as our senses are fallacious, and it is only through their medium that we perceive any thing, so we cannot trust to them, and therefore have no assurance of the truth of any thing whatever. Yet upon this basis of nothing, the Eleatics strange to tell raised a system of physics, of which the principal doctrines were, that the universe was a compound of the four elements; that the stars were kindled up by the motion of the clouds; that the sun was an immense body of ignited vapor; but that various suns lighted various parts of the earth; and, finally, (the only rational dogma, though not derived by any logical inference from premises,) that there is but one God who rules over all nature.

Of the Eleatic school were Leucippus and his disciple Democritus; though they seem to have introduced a philosophy considerably different from that of Parmenides, Xenophanes, and Zeno. Leucippus supposed all things to have originated from atoms, moving in an infinite space, and producing all sensible objects by their combinations: but it was only these combinations that we perceived; we did not perceive the atoms themselves; we therefore did not perceive the reality of things, but only their appearances; a strange and pitiful sophistry. If Democritus held these opinions, it was no wonder that he, who is said to have laughed at every thing, should have laughed at the doctrines of his own sect, and at all who adopted them: but the truth is, that Democritus was of no such sportive disposition. He spent the greatest part of his life (which was extended to a hundred years) in solitary study, in observing the phenomena of nature, making

experiments on minerals, and dissecting the human body—a course of life which indicates a genius superior to the folly of framing idle theories on the sole basis of conjecture.

From the same school of Elea, though sometimes accounted the father of a new sect, was Heraclitus, whose disposition, the reverse of that of Democritus, accounted every thing a matter of melancholy. He seems to have been endowed with the austere spirit of a Cynic: for, rejecting the chief magistracy of his native city, Ephesus, on account of the incurable vice of its inhabitants, he betook himself to the desert, and fed upon roots and water, making the beasts his companions in preference to man. He wrote a treatise on Nature, in which he made fire the origin of all things; but this fire he conceived to be endowed with mind, and to be properly the *anima mundi*, or the Divinity. His writings were purposely obscure, whence he got the epithet of Σκοτεινος, or the dark philosopher. It is said, that Euripides having sent this treatise on Nature to Socrates, the latter, with his accustomed modesty, gave it this character, "That all that he could understand of it seemed good; and that what surpassed his understanding, he presumed might likewise be so."

Hitherto, the principal object of the ancient Greek philosophy seems to have been the framing of theoretical systems of the origin and fabric of the universe, and the nature of the Divinity, accounted its soul, or animating principle: sublime, no doubt, and daring speculations, but little accommodated either to the weak intellect of man, or suited to improve his moral nature and increase his happiness. We must now speak of a philosopher who took juster views both of the powers and of the wants of human nature, and who, accordingly, directed his attention to that true philosophy whose object is at once to enlighten the understanding and improve the heart. It is easily perceived, that I speak here of Socrates, he who, according to Cicero's comprehensive eulogy, "brought down philosophy from heaven to dwell upon earth, who made her even an inmate of our habitations,"* and directed her research to the real interests of man, in the pursuit of his highest attainable happiness. With the fate of this illustrious teacher we are already acquainted.† It is necessary here only to take notice of his method of philosophizing, and of his principal doctrines. Greece was, in the days of Socrates, overrun with Sophists—pretended philosophers, whose whole science consisted in a certain futile logic; an artificial apparatus of general arguments, which they could apply to every topic, and by which they could maintain, with an appearance of plausibility, either side of any proposition. It was usual for these philosophers to get up in the public assemblies or in the

* Cic. Tusc. quæst. l. i. c. 5.
† See supra, book ii. c. 2.

theatres, and offer to argue or make an oration on any subject that should be named. The Athenians, a superficial people, fond of every thing new and extraordinary, were quite captivated with this kind of jugglery.* The Sophists passed for the wisest and most eloquent of men; and the youth flocked in crowds to their schools, where the rudiments of this perverse art were explained and communicated. The sober part of the Athenians judged this to be a very useless discipline; but the wiser Socrates saw the pernicious tendency of this new set of philosophizing, which made every thing uncertain and problematical; and his penetrating intellect easily perceived the method by which it was to be exposed and destroyed.

As all the strength and skill of the Sophists lay in the application of general arguments to the questions which they canvassed, nothing more was necessary for their confutation than to bring them to particulars—to set out by some simple and self-evident propositions, which being granted, another followed equally undeniable, till the disputant was conducted, step by step, by his own confessions, to that side of the question on which lay the truth. No method could be devised more effectual than this for the detection of sophistry: and the Athenian logicians very soon found that their general apparatus of argument would not avail them against so subtle an antagonist. They lost all credit and reputation as philosophers; but they had influence enough to poison the minds of the people with the belief that Socrates taught impious doctrines, contrary to the religion of their country: and their malice, as we have already seen, was but too successful. Their revenge was satiated by the death of one of the best of men: a crime which drew upon Athens the reproach of all Greece, and which she vainly endeavored to expiate by the punishment of his judges, and the honors paid to his memory.

The doctrines of Socrates, which he never committed to writing, are only to be gathered imperfectly from Plato and Xenophon. The latter is the better authority, as Plato is generally believed to have used the name of Socrates on many occasions to give weight to his own opinions. Socrates founded all his morality on the belief of a God, who delighted in virtue, and whose justice would reward the good and punish the wicked in an after state. Of consequence, he believed in the immortality of the soul. He held that there were intermediate beings between God and man, who presided over the different parts of the creation, and who were to be honored with an inferior worship. He believed that virtuous men were particularly favored by the Divinity, who more espe-

* Seneca has well compared sophistical reasoning to the tricks of a juggler, though he judges too favorably in accounting it a harmless play. "Idem de istis captionibus dico: nec ignoranti nocent, nec scientem juvant."—Sen. Epist. 45.

cially manifested his care of them by the constant presence and aid of a good genius, who directed all their actions, and guarded them by secret monitions from impending evils: but on this subject, as he declined to express himself with precision, it has been reasonably conjectured, that he alluded merely to the influence of conscience, which extends its power to the virtuous alone, and deserts the vicious, abandoning them to the just consequences of their crimes. With regard to the pursuit of knowledge, Socrates held that all science was contemptible which did not tend to the happiness of man by the regulation of his conduct in society; that the most beneficial wisdom is to be intimately acquainted with ourselves, to see our errors and defects, that we may be enabled to amend them. He inculcated a veneration for the religion of our country, a strict respect to its laws, and a reverence for its governors, while at the same time he held the rational opinion that the true foundation of legal government is the consent of the people, and the surest bond of the subject's allegiance, the watchful care and virtuous disposition of the sovereign.

Socrates did not affect the manners or the habits of a public teacher. He had no school; he gave no professed lectures on philosophy; he mingled with his fellow citizens in all ranks of life, conversing with each man on the subjects best suited to his occupation and talents. The theatres, the temples, the shops of the artists, the courts of justice, the public streets, were all occasionally the scene of his moral conversations and instructive arguments. Even the house of the courtesan Aspasia was honored with his frequent visits. He found in that accomplished woman a mind stored with various knowledge, an acute and vigorous understanding, and those engaging manners which gave her a powerful hold of the minds of the Athenian youth. She was the mistress and confidant of Pericles, who did not disdain to consult her on affairs of public concern. If we should hesitate to suppose that the philosopher thought it not unworthy of his character to improve her morals and reclaim her mind to virtue, he might reasonably seek his own improvement, and avail himself of her knowledge of the world to enlarge and extend his powers of utility.

> "Tutor of Athens! he in every street
> Dealt priceless treasure: goodness his delight,
> Wisdom his wealth, and glory his reward.
> Deep through the human heart, with playful skill,
> His simple question stole; as into truth
> And serious deeds he smiled the laughing race;
> Taught moral happy life, whate'er can bless
> Or grace mankind; and what he taught he was."
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> *Thomson's Liberty*, part ii.

With the death of Socrates, sophistry regained her empire. Even his own disciples departed from the doctrines of their master. Aristippus, the founder of the Cyrenaic sect, adopted great part of the Socratic morality, but added some peculiar opinions of his

own. It was his idea that a philosopher would follow justice and the practice of virtue, from the sole consideration of his own advantage, and without regard to the interests of others. He placed the chief happiness of man in pleasure, and true philosophy was that which procured the largest portion of selfish gratification. We must presume that intellectual, not sensual pleasure, was in the philosopher's contemplation while he advanced this dogma; but even with this allowance, his object was far less worthy than that which his master proposed, general utility.

The morality of Socrates, thus modified by the Cyrenaic sect and not improved, was pushed the length of extravagance by the Cynics. The founder of this sect was Antisthenes, a pupil of Socrates, but who probably did not possess the esteem of his master. To evince his contempt of luxury, he chose to wear an old and tattered cloak. "Why so ostentatious?" said Socrates. "Through your ragged coat I see your vanity." Virtue, in the opinion of the Cynics, consisted in renouncing all the conveniences and comforts of life. They clothed themselves in rags, disdained to live in a house, slept in the streets, ate nothing but what was coarse and insipid, and wandered about the country with a stick and a knapsack. They decried all the arts as either useless or dangerous. Science was altogether fruitless and unnecessary; for a virtuous man had attained to the perfection of his nature, and had no need to learn any thing. From voluntary ignorance they advanced to impudence; and having nothing to lose, while they scorned all gain, they indulged themselves in satire and invective without restraint. It is, however, not improbable that this spirit of censure with which they were actuated has drawn many calumnies on their sect. The vices with which Diogenes has been reproached are hardly to be believed, when we know that some of the most virtuous of the Greeks were his admirers and disciples.

As the character of this extraordinary person was differently judged of in his own time, some accounting him the wisest of men, and others little better than a madman, it is no wonder that his estimation with the moderns should be equally various. It is not to be doubted that the love of singularity was a powerful motive of his conduct and opinions. He opposed the common sense of mankind, and affected a contempt even of reputation, as he found that conduct a new mode of acquiring it. But that in his character there were many features of a truly philosophic mind, we are warranted to conclude from the uncommon excellence of those opinions and sentiments of his which the ancient authors have preserved. Diogenes held that the practice of virtue was man's chief end of existence; that as the body is strengthened by active labor, the mind is invigorated and kept in health by a constant tenor of active virtue; that even the contempt of pleasure is a solid and rational pleasure; that self-applause is a sufficient reward to the wise man;

while glory, honors, and wealth are only the bait of fools; that the consummation of folly is to be loud in the praise of virtue without practising it; that *the gods* refuse the prayers of man often from compassion.

The caustic wit of Diogenes procured him both enemies and admirers. Of this talent the ancient writers, and particularly his namesake Laertius, have preserved many specimens. There was a mutual hostility between him and Plato. That the latter, however, entertained no mean opinion of the talents of his rival, appears from his terming him *a Socrates run mad*. Plato had defined man to be a two-legged animal without feathers. Diogenes plucked the feathers from a cock, and thrust him into the academy: "See," said he, "Plato's *man!*" The bluntness of his manners was exemplified in his celebrated answer to Alexander the Great, who, coming to visit the philosopher, and finding him seated in his tub, asked if he could do him any favor; "Yes," said the other, "stand from between me and the sun." Discoursing, one day, in a grave tone, on the practice of virtue, when he observed his auditors dropping off, he began all at once to bawl out a song of ribaldry and nonsense, when immediately a great crowd gathered around him: "See," said he, "how willingly a fool is listened to, when a wise man is neglected." Hearing, on one occasion, a worthless fellow lamenting that he was dying at a distance from his native country, "Don't be uneasy, friend, about that," said he, "wherever you die, you'll find a passage to hell."

It is not a little extraordinary that a sect even of sophists should have arisen from the school of Socrates. This was the Megaric sect, of which Euclid was the founder; not Euclid the mathematician, for his science owned no affinity with sophistry. The Megaric philosophers were the happy inventors of those logical quibbles which, even in modern ages, have exercised the talents of the gravest men, and which were often employed with success to propagate error and obscure the truth. The chief philosophers of this sect, besides its founder, were Eubulides, Alexinus Eleensis, characteristically named *Elenchinus* or the Wrangler, Diodorus, surnamed *Cronos* or the Driveller, and Stilpo, a philosopher of real learning and ability, but who gave too much importance to subtilty of disputation — in Brucker's phrase, *in litigioso dicendi genere potentissimus*.

The most celebrated of the disciples of Socrates was Plato, a philosopher whose doctrines have had a more extensive and a more lasting empire over the minds of mankind than those perhaps of any other of the ancients. Plato, a native of Ægina, and thus by his country an Athenian, was born about 430, B. C. His lineage was most illustrious, being descended on the father's side from Codrus, and on the mother's from Solon. With every accomplishment of education suitable to his birth, and showing

early indications of a genius for poetry, he attached himself at the age of twenty to the school of Socrates, and soon became the greatest adept in the philosophy of his master, whose discourses he committed to writing in the same colloquial form in which they were delivered. The Dialogues of Plato are therefore the most ample documents of the Socratic philosophy, though not the most correct and pure; for it was Plato's practice to blend his own opinions with those of Socrates, and this without any note of distinction. He learned the dialectic art from Euclid the Megaric; he studied the Pythagorean system under Timæus and Archytas; and his travels into Egypt accomplished him in all the wisdom of that country, and particularly in the science of geometry. Returning to Athens, he established his school in the grove called the Academy, over the gate of which, to show the importance he annexed to mathematical studies, he placed this inscription, *Οὐδεὶς ἀγεωμέτρητος εἰσίτω*, "Let none enter here who is ignorant of geometry."

The reputation of Plato procured him numberless hearers and admirers. Among these were some of the most eminent men of Greece. It is enough to say that Demosthenes, Isocrates, and Aristotle were his disciples. The philosophy of Plato embraced three distinct branches of science: theology, under which are comprehended his metaphysical opinions: physics: and politics. In the first department it was Plato's fundamental doctrine *that from nothing, nothing can proceed*. Believing, therefore, in the eternal existence of the Deity, he believed likewise in the eternity of *matter*, as the substratum or ὕλη of the Deity's operations. This *matter*, however, was in a chaotic state, and endowed with no qualities whatever, till the eternal mind conferred these qualities upon it, reduced it into order, and thus formed the beautiful fabric of the universe, of which *the idea* or archetype had existed from all eternity in himself. But in chaotic matter Plato conceived that as there was an original deformity, so there was a natural resistance to that perfect order and excellence which the Deity sought to produce, but which he could not entirely overcome: and hence the origin of that evil which partially contaminates his works: yet here the philosopher seems himself to perceive the objection from the boundless power of the Divinity, as he expresses himself with great obscurity on the subject. His notions of God, however, are not only most sublime, but extremely refined. He conceived that the Divine nature consisted of three distinct essences, states, or hypostases: the first a pure and self-existent Essence, whose sole attribute was goodness, hence indiscriminately termed by Plato *τὸ ὂν* and *τὸ ἀγαθόν*: the second he conceived to be Mind, the wisdom or reason of the first, and the proper Creator of the universe, and therefore by Plato termed sometimes *Νοῦς* (the intelligence,) *Λόγος* (the word,) and sometimes *Δημιουργὸς* (the Creator;) the third he conceived to be the Soul of the world; as

he conceived the activity of created matter to infer an inhabiting mind, and this he termed either simply the *ψυχη* (the soul,) or *ψυχη του κοσμου* (soul of the world.) The second *hypostasis* he supposed to be an emanation from the first, and the third from both. Such is the Platonic Trinity, bearing, in its general description, a strong resemblance to the Christian; but differing in this material point, that in the former, the second and third persons are subordinate and inferior to the first. Yet the learned Cudworth and other ingenious men have strenuously labored to prove the perfect conformity of the two doctrines.

But in the metaphysics of Plato there is yet another principle, which it is more difficult to comprehend. This is his doctrine of *ideas*, which in some parts of his writings he seems to consider as eternal existences separate from the Divinity, and in others, to regard only as certain forms or notions eternally existing in the Divine mind. The former, Plutarch* seems to think, was Plato's meaning. But be this as it may, he regarded these ideas as somethink eternal and immutable, and therefore held that they were the only true and proper objects of science. It was according to these eternally-existing ideas that God himself had formed the universe, which he endowed with a living soul, whence proceed both its periodical revolutions and its active and productive energy. But the universe, being thus animated by a soul which proceeds from God, is hence to be considered as containing a part of the Divinity. The planets are in like manner animated by a part of the Divine nature. Man, endowed with a rational soul, contains within himself a part of God. That part—his intellectual spirit—therefore, existed from all eternity, and is in its nature incapable of extinction. Inhabiting a body of corrupt and rebel matter, it is subject to vice and misery; but, by a noble warfare against the corruption of its earthly vehicle, by subduing its earthly passions, and exercising itself in the practice of virtue and divine contemplation, it best fits itself for returning to its original state, a coexistence with the Divinity.

What is properly termed the physics of Plato is so chimerical, to say no worse, that it scarcely merits attention. Fire and earth he supposed were the component parts of the visible world, and these were united by air and water. The particles of earth are cubes, those of fire are pyramidal, those of air are *octohedrons*, and those of water *eicosihedrons*. They are combined according to geometrical laws, and the *anima mundi* gives motion and regularity to the whole.

In politics Plato was equally a visionary speculatist as in physics. In his *Republic* and *Dialogue on Laws*, his notions betray an ignorance of human nature, with much enthusiasm of mind, and a

* See his Platonic Questions and Commentary on the *Timæus* of Plato.

large kind of benevolence. He wished to make all men philosophers, and to extinguish every vicious propensity by an absolute control of the passions; and his Republic might indeed were such a scheme practicable.

Two circumstances seem chiefly to have contributed to the great popularity and duration of the Platonic philosophy: the one, the eloquence with which its doctrines were propounded: the other, the pleasing effect of the notion which, by approaching man to the Deity, and making him even a part of the Divine nature, flattered his pride, and increased his self-importance.

The school of Plato, or the philosophy of the Ancient Academy, had in itself many divisions, whose particular distinguishing tenets it would be both tedious and fruitless to enumerate. But the Platonic philosophy found its chief opponents in four remarkable sects—those of Aristotle, of Pyrrho, of Zeno, and Epicurus; in other words, the Peripatetic, the Skeptic, the Stoic, and the Epicurean.

Aristotle was born at Stagyra, a Thracian city, then under the dominion of Macedonia. His father was physician to Philip, the father of Alexander the Great. After a youth of dissipation, he betook himself with indefatigable ardor to the study of philosophy, and was for twenty years a favorite disciple of Plato. His high reputation for universal learning procured him from Philip the important charge of the education of the young Alexander—a trust which he fulfilled with zeal and ability. After his pupil had arrived at manhood, and had begun the career of his impetuous life, the philosopher returned to Athens, where he established a school of philosophy in the Lyceum. It was his custom to discourse to his disciples as walking, and hence his philosophy was termed *peripatetic*. Endowed with great original genius, he disdained an implicit adherence to the doctrines of Plato, or those of any other philosopher. He not only dared to think and reason for himself on almost every branch of human knowledge, but, nobly confident of his own powers, to prescribe the laws of reasoning to others, and even to reduce to system the combined result of all that was known in his age, both in the science of matter and of mind. A great body of his writings is yet preserved,*

* Very few of the writings of Aristotle were published during his lifetime. Among these few were probably his Poetics and his Art of Rhetoric, as both these treatises were composed for the use of his pupil Alexander, and might probably pass into many hands during the life of their author. The rest of his works he bequeathed to Theophrastus, who left them to Neleus Scepsius, the latter sold a part of them to Ptolemy Philadelphos, and these perished in the burning of the Alexandrian library. The rest were buried, as is said, for the sake of preservation, in some subterraneous vault, where they lay forgotten for 130 years, and at their recovery were found in a very defective state from corruption. In that state they fell into the hands of Apellicon of Teos, who supplied the deficiencies from his own invention, and not always with great

and is sufficient to warrant our estimation of Aristotle as one of the most vigorous and comprehensive geniuses that ever the world has produced.

The logics of Aristotle are contained in the books of his *Organon*. A predominant passion of this philosopher, observable in most of his writings, and more particularly in his logics, is the classifying and arranging the objects of knowledge. Thus the Organon sets out with a division of all things of a simple or uncompounded nature, into ten *categories*. These are *substance*, *quantity*, *quality*, *relation*, *place*, *time*, *situation*, *having*, *doing*, *suffering*. Each of these is discussed at large in a separate chapter. We have next the division and arrangement of propositions into five predicables or universals, viz., *genus*, *species*, *difference*, *property*, and *accident*. One or other of these may be predicated or affirmed of all propositions. The purpose of the division into *categories*, is to arrange all the simple and uncompounded objects of human knowledge under certain general classes; and by subdividing these, as private soldiers make part of a company, and so many companies make a regiment, we can, in like manner, muster all the notions that enter the human mind, in rank and file, as a well-ordered and regular army. By the division into *predicables*, we are taught all the relations which the subject can have to the predicate, or the thing affirmed of the subject. That divisions of this kind may have a beneficial effect in producing an accuracy in thinking and reasoning, it would be vain to deny; though it may be alike vain to annex to them such a degree of importance as they seem to have held with Aristotle and his followers.

But the chief part of the Organon of Aristotle is his theory of syllogisms contained in those books called the *Analytics*, because the intention of them is to resolve all reasoning into simple ingredients. It is well known what importance was for many ages annexed to syllogistic reasoning, in regarding it, not only as a test of truth, but as an instrument for the advancement of science. It is now, perhaps more than it ought to be, undervalued. It may be safely affirmed, that there is no false proposition which can stand the test of fair syllogistic argument; and, therefore, the utility of this criterion for the detection of sophistical reasoning cannot be denied. But it is equally an error to suppose, that syllogistic argument is capable of leading to discoveries in any of the sciences. If our forefathers, therefore, by trusting to it as a guide in the latter department, attributed more to this mode of reasoning than it was capable of performing, we of the present day, by denying its use in the former, and altogether exploding its employment,

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felicity. They came, finally, into the possession of Tyrannion, the grammarian, who used the same freedom in a yet greater degree. Hence we must make much allowance for the imperfection, obscurity, and perhaps contradiction which may be found in the writings of Aristotle, as they now appear.

seem to have run to an extreme as blameable. This error has arisen from a misapprehension of the sentiments of Lord Bacon, who is generally supposed to have condemned the syllogistic mode of reasoning as altogether useless. But this is a mistake. That great philosopher justly exploded the application of logical reasoning to the science of physics, by clearly showing that such a process could never lead to discoveries in that science, which were the fruit alone of induction from experiment, and the observation of facts. But he was far from denying the utility of logical reasoning in its proper sphere. He remarks, that it is the province of logic to lead not to the invention of arts, but of arguments, and, therefore, that in the popular sciences of morality, law, divinity, and the like, it has its proper and useful application.*

A large portion of the works of Aristotle is occupied by his physical writings. In these he treats separately of the nature of the world, of the heavens, of meteors, of the human soul, of the length and shortness of life, of youth, old age, and death. He has likewise given us ample *history of animals* in ten books—a portion only of a work which extended to forty books. The regard which Alexander entertained for his preceptor, as well as for the interests of science, was manifested in his collecting, at a prodigious expense, during his Asiatic expedition, all the rare productions of nature, and particularly as astonishing variety of animals, which he sent home to Greece, for the use of Aristotle in the composition of his natural history. The descriptions, therefore, of natural objects, and of the structure and habits of animals, contained in this work, are extremely valuable, as being the result of actual examination and study. In the description of the heavenly bodies and their motions, and generally in mathematical science, Aristotle has shown less knowledge than his predecessors, Pythagoras and Plato.

The vanity of Aristotle prompted him to aim at universal knowledge; and professing to embrace the whole circle of the sciences, he only manifests the more signally his superficial knowledge in many departments, and his presumptuous rashness in deciding questions beyond the reach of human intellect. These palpable defects have injured his legitimate reputation in those branches of science in which he is truly excellent. It is in his critical and moral writings that the talents of Aristotle are more usefully displayed than in any others of his works: I allude here to the fragment, which alone we possess, of his *Poetics*, and to his *Art of Rhetoric;* more particularly the latter.

The Poetics of Aristotle have commonly been considered as a

* See Bacon's works, vol. i. p. 63, folio edition. The utility of logical reasoning is most ably shown by Dr. Reid, in the concluding part of his Analysis of Aristotle's Logic, in *Sketches of the History of Man*, book iii.

brief digest of the laws of criticism in poetry; but it is that species of criticism which assigns no other foundation for its judgments than authority, or the practice of the best writers. Aristotle in this fragment has not ascended to the source of criticism, which is to be found in the structure of the mind and nature of the passions. He describes with great precision the three different species of poetical comedy, tragedy, and epic* composition. He details the requisite ingredients of each species with respect to subject, as they are classed under the divisions of fable, sentiments, and manners; and he briefly lays down the rules for the structure and style of each species. But this code of laws rests upon the sole authority of the legislator, and not upon any solid basis of nature, or consonance to the universal feelings of mankind. The only reason given by Aristotle for their observance is, that Homer, Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, and the best of the Greek poets, have observed them. This, no doubt, is a presumption of their rationality; and, at any rate, it is useful instruction in any art to know what has been the general practice of the best artists.

But the *Treatise on Rhetoric* is not a fragment, and must be more seriously considered. In that treatise, the author has given an elaborate analysis of the passions, and of the sources of pain and pleasure, happiness and unhappiness; as such an analysis affords the best instruction in the means of swaying the passions and persuading the judgment to the purposes of the orator, which it is the province of this science to teach. Here Aristotle has shown the most profound knowledge of human nature, and a genius truly philosophical—in investigating the most delicate modifications of the affections, and the power they have of balancing each other's influence; as he has strikingly evinced his own peculiar talent of generalization and scientific arrangement.

The style of Aristotle is a great contrast to that of Plato: the latter is eloquent, diffuse, and figurative; the former dry, sententious, and so compressed, that it requires often the most painful attention to follow his chain of reasoning, and in many instances even to discover his true meaning. This is particularly the case in his metaphysical writings. The obscurity prevalent in these parts of his works was remarked by ancient writers, and has given rise to numberless commentaries and explanations, totally different from each other. It has been supposed that on some difficult points of discussion, the philosopher studied to express himself

* On the subject of comedy, Aristotle has been extremely brief in his instructions. He has remarked, in general, that similar rules apply to a comic as to a serious subject, meaning that what he has said regarding the unities of time, place, and subject, and likewise the congruity of the sentiments and manners, have the same application in the one species of the drama as in the other. The Poetics of Aristotle, however, are evidently an imperfected work, of which a considerable part has perished.

with obscurity: and hence Diogenes Laertius has compared himself to the cuttle-fish, which darkens the water around it to escape from danger. But Aristotle, wherever he is intelligible, discovers ample proof of a great, original, and comprehensive genius.

While Aristotle was employed in rearing the structure of the peripatetic philosophy, Pyrrho, his contemporary, was busy in examining the opinions of all the different sects of philosophers.* It was his notion that the only true wisdom consisted in doubting of every thing. Endowed with penetration enough to discover the insufficiency of many of the prevailing systems, and clearly perceiving the imbecility of the human understanding to resolve the most important questions both in the sciences of matter and of mind, it was his desire to expose the futility of all the laborious exertions of his predecessors in the search of truth, and to find a philosophic tranquillity of spirit in the belief that all was doubt and uncertainty.

The Pyrrhonists, or skeptics, therefore, formed no systems: they amused themselves in attacking the weak parts of other systems of philosophy, and they had nothing to defend of their own. They found great advantage in the sophistical mode of reasoning, which they could fairly employ against those who used it, and which they could successfully expose when used against themselves. It was not unnatural that the skeptics should conclude from the irreconcilable differences of opinion that prevailed among various sects of philosophers, that among so many opposite systems the greater part had taught error instead of truth; but it was a rash conclusion thence to infer that truth had no existence, or that certainty on any subject of philosophical speculation was altogether unattainable. The skeptic, or Pyrrhonist, involuntarily refuted his own opinions by his practice: for though he held, in theory, that there was no reality in moral distinctions, and that truth and falsehood, virtue and vice, beauty and deformity, had no real or essential difference, his actions and conduct in life were like those of other men, perpetually influenced and regulated by the belief of these essential differences. Thus the ridicule which he affected to throw upon other systems could be retorted with greater force upon his own; for that man is evidently less chargeable with absurdity who pursues a line of conduct which he believes to be right, than he who follows a line of conduct in absolute doubt whether it be right or wrong.

As the attainment of a perfect tranquillity of mind was the professed object of the Pyrrhonists, the opposite and rival sects of the Stoics and Epicureans proposed the same end in their systems of

* Pyrrho was a native of Elea, and born in the fourth century before Christ: he was a disciple of Anaxarchus, and accompanied that philosopher to India, in the expedition of Alexander the Great.

philosophy. We have seen that the course pursued by the skeptics was a very improper one to attain its end, since it is obvious that there can be no mental tranquility where the reason and the feelings are in constant opposition. The Stoics cherished, if not a more certain, yet a far more consistent, and doubtless a more dignified system of sentiments and conduct. They strove to attain philosophic tranquility by an absolute command and sovereignty over the passions, and a perfect indifference to all the accidents and calamities of life. The founder of this sect, which is among the most distinguished schools of philosophy, was Zeno the younger, a native of Cyprus, who flourished in the third century before Christ. He was a disciple of Crates the Cynic; and on that system of philosophy he founded his own, which may be considered as an offspring of the Cynical school. The Stoical doctrines have had a very extensive prevalence and duration; and though in some particulars palpably erroneous, may be accounted, on the whole, more consonant to right reason, and more favorable to the practice of virtue, than those of any other sect of the philosophy of the ancients.

According to the Stoics, the whole universe, and God himself, the creator and soul of that universe, are regulated by certain laws, which are immutable and resulting from necessity. The actions of God himself are regulated by those general laws; yet in one sense they may be considered as free and voluntary, viz.: that as there is nothing external of the universe which God pervades, and which his soul regulates, there is nothing external of himself which can impel or necessitate him. Man, according to the notions of the Stoics, is a part of the divinity. The human soul is a portion of that great soul which pervades the universe. The will of man is subject, like the divine will, to unalterable laws; yet it is virtually free, because man believes himself a free agent, and his conduct is influenced by that belief. He obeys voluntarily and from inclination that destiny which he must have obeyed *ab æate*, though he had not inclined it. Man being a part of the universe which is regulated by God, cannot complain that he is bound by the same laws which regulate and bind universal nature, and even God himself. The wise man, therefore, never considers what is good or evil with respect to himself. Whatever happened to him must necessarily have happened according to the order of nature; because had it not been necessary, it would not have happened. The pains and pleasures of an individual are, therefore, unworthy of the regard of him who attends to the universal good: his pains and pleasures are determined by the same law which determined his existence. He cannot repine that he exists, for at whom shall he repine? He existed by the necessity of nature. Virtue, in the opinion of a Stoic, was nothing more than a manly resolution to accommodate the unalterable laws of nature. Vice was a weak and dastardly endeavor to oppose

those laws. Vice therefore was folly, and virtue the only true wisdom.

But the virtue of the Stoics was not a principle of tranquil and passive acquiescence; it was a state of continual, active, and vigorous exertion. It was the duty of man to exercise the faculties of his mind in acquainting himself with the nature, the causes, and the relations of every part of that universe which he sees around him, that he may fully understand his own place in it, and the duties which he is destined and called on to fulfil. It is incumbent on man likewise to exercise his faculties in discerning and distinguishing those things over which he has the power and control, and those which are beyond his power, and therefore ought not to be the objects of his care or his attention. All things whatever, according to the Stoics, fall under one or the other of these descriptions. To the class of things within our power belong our opinions, our desires, affections, endeavors, aversions, and, in a word, whatever may be termed our own works. To the class of things beyond our power belong the body of man, his goods or possessions, honors, dignities, offices, and generally what cannot be termed his own works. The former class of things are free, voluntary, and altogether at our command. The latter are in all respects the contrary; we cannot call them our own, nor in any shape control them. To the former, therefore, alone the wise man directs his care, and by a due attention to them his happiness is in his own power. The latter he despises, as incapable of affecting his real welfare, and in no degree obedient to his will.

As the Stoics believed the universe to be the work of an all-powerful, all-wise, and supremely beneficent Being, whose providence continually regulates the whole of that system of which every part is so combined as to produce the greatest possible sum of general good; so they regarded man as a principal instrument in the hand of God to accomplish that great purpose. The Creator, therefore, with transcendent wisdom, had so framed the moral constitution of man, that he finds his own chief happiness in promoting the welfare and happiness of his fellow creatures. "In the free consent of man to fulfil this end of his being, by accommodating his mind to the divine will, and thus endeavoring to discharge his part in society with cheerful zeal, with perfect integrity, with manly resolution, and with an entire resignation to the decrees of Providence, lies the sum and essence of his duty."

Very different from this was the philosophy of Epicurus, which, however, proposed to itself the same end — the attainment of a perfect tranquillity of mind. The term by which he marked the object of his philosophy, contributed much to increase the number of his disciples. "The supreme happiness of man," said Epicurus, "consists in *pleasure*. To this centre tend all his desires; and this, however disguised, is the real object of all his actions. The purpose of philosophy is to teach whatever best conduces

to the health of the body and of the mind; for where either is unsound or diseased, he can enjoy no true happiness or pleasure. As the health of the body is best secured by temperance, and the refraining from all lustful gratifications of the senses, so the health of the mind is best promoted by the practice of virtue, and the exercise of the benevolent and social affections." Thus, the term pleasure, as explained by Epicurus, involves nothing unworthy of the pursuit of the good and virtuous. Epicurus himself is said to have been a man of worth and probity, and it is a certain fact that some of the most virtuous of the ancients were the professed disciples of his system. But that the principle of his philosophy is unsound, needs no other proof than this: that if *pleasure* is admitted to be man's chief object of pursuit, every man must be allowed to be the best judge of what constitutes his *pleasure*, and will determine, according to his own feelings, from what sources it is to be drawn. The practice of temperance might have been the pleasure of Epicurus; and we are told that it was so, and that his favorite diet, and what he usually presented to his guests, was bread and water. But it is the chief pleasure of others to be intemperate and voluptuous. It might have been the chief pleasure of Epicurus to be honest and just in his dealings, but others find pleasure in fraud and chicane. In short, there is no vice or crime that might not find an apology, or rather a recommendation. Had it not afforded pleasure it would not have been practised or committed. "If it is allowable for me," we shall suppose the disciple of Epicurus to say to his master, "if it is allowable for me to pursue pleasure as my chief object, it is, of consequence, allowable for me to be vicious, if I find pleasure in it." "But you are punished," says Epicurus, "in the consequence; and you will find vice productive of pain instead of pleasure." "Of that," says the disciple, "I take my risk; I look to the consequence, and I find it overbalanced by my present gratification: I find pleasure in this action, notwithstanding the hazard of its consequence: it is therefore allowable for me to commit it." Epicurus must grant that the conclusion is fair and legitimate.

Equally erroneous with his system of morality, was Epicurus's system of nature. An infinite number of atoms existing from all eternity in an infinite space, and continually in motion, were the elements of that matter of which the universe is composed; but this universe, thus composed of atomical or indivisible parts, has subsisted in its present form from all eternity; and ever will subsist. It is, therefore, of necessary existence, and we have no need to resort to the power of a Creator to account for its origin, or to the wisdom of a Deity for its maintenance and government. But though the notion of a Deity did not enter into the system of Epicurus, to any active effect, he did not deny that the gods might exist. He professed even to teach that an order of eternal essences, clothed with a species of body, and endowed with senses

for the perception of pleasure, resided in some superior region of the universe, where they enjoyed a serene and infinitely happy existence, unalloyed by any knowledge or perception of the affairs of this material world, and undisturbed by any care or concern for its inhabitants. A religious creed, which, as Cicero well observes, is but a mask for absolute atheism, and which its author could have no other reason for propounding, than the servile fear of incurring danger from the open avowal of impiety.*

From the foregoing brief account of the different sects or schools of philosophy in Greece, I shall draw only two reflections: The one is, that with a very few exceptions, and more particularly that of the sect last mentioned, amidst all the errors incident to the mind unenlightened by revealed religion, the reason of mankind has, in all ages, looked up to a supreme, intelligent, and omnipotent Being—the Author of our existence—the Creator and the Governor of the universe: a belief which forces itself upon the most uncultivated understanding, and which the advancement of the intellectual powers tends always to strengthen and confirm. The other reflection is, that, from the great variety and opposition of those systems which we have enumerated of the Greek philosophers, we may perceive among that people a liberal spirit of toleration in matters of opinion, which stopped short at absolute irreligion and impiety; and a freedom of judgment in all matters of philosophical speculation, which did honor to their national character, and the genius of their legislative systems. If the Greek philosophers did not attain to truth, or to the perfection of science, they had, at least, the road open before them; and their errors may afford useful instruction to the moderns, by ascertaining the limits of the mental powers on matters of abstract speculation, by dispelling prejudices, simplifying the objects of investigation and discovery, and bringing the rational and candid inquirer nearer to the ends of his pursuit.

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* Cic. *de Nat. Deor.* lib. i. in fine.

# BOOK THE THIRD.

## CHAPTER I.

THE ROMAN HISTORY—Earliest Periods of the History of Rome—Etruscans—Foundation of Rome—Disputed Accounts of—Romulus—Rape of the Sabines—Origin of the Political Institutions of the Romans—Union with the Sabines—Numa—His Institutions—Tullus Hostilius—Ancus Martius—Tarquinius Priscus.

OF the precise era when the country of Italy was peopled, we have no certain accounts, nor any thing beyond probable conjecture. There seem, however, good grounds to believe that this peninsula, enjoying great advantages of situation, soil, and climate, was very early a populous country, and inhabited in one quarter even by a refined and polished nation, many ages before the Roman name was known. This people was known by the appellation of Etrurians or Etruscans, though their more ancient designation is said to have been Tyrrheni, from the name of a Lydian prince who brought with him a colony of his countrymen from the lesser Asia, and planted that part of Italy afterwards called Etruria. Of the early history of this people there remain but a few detached and obscure traces to be found in the ancient authors; but there is reason to believe that, like all other colonies, their progress to civilization was much more rapid than that of an aboriginal people, and that the Etruscans were in a very advanced state of improvement in manners and the arts, while the surrounding nations or tribes in the centre of Italy were yet extremely barbarous. The Roman historians acknowledge this fact. Livy speaks of the Etruscans as a great and opulent people in Italy, powerful both at land and sea, before the origin of the Roman state. Dionysius of Halicarnassus deduces most of the religious institutions of the Romans from Etruria. Augury and divination, which were essential ingredients in most of their ceremonies and mysteries, were certainly derived from that country, as probably were the first dawnings of Roman science and literature. The religion of the Etruscans was polytheism, and many of their deities were com-

mon to them with the Greeks, as those of the latter with the divinities of the Phœnicians and other Asiatic nations. The Roman theogony can easily be traced to those origins. The Cabirian mysteries of the Romans, the Mithriac and Acheronic ceremonies, were all immediately derived from Etruria. The Etruscan alphabet, nearly that of the Phœnicians, was likewise used by the Romans in the early ages of their state. The gradual change from this ancient alphabet to the characters used by the Romans in the latter periods, may be distinctly traced by the series of *inscriptions* yet remaining.

The ancient Etrurians are celebrated for their knowledge of astronomy, which countenances the notion of their Asiatic origin. They had successfully cultivated poetry and music. Scenical representations were in great repute among them; and the first comedians who appeared at Rome were brought from that country, on occasion of a pestilence, either from a superstitious idea of appeasing the wrath of the gods, or the humbler, though not less rational motive of supporting the spirits of the people under the general calamity.

It is probable the Etruscans had made great progress in the fine arts of sculpture and painting, and the practice of these arts presupposes a very high state of civilization. The elegance of the Etruscan vases, and the beautiful painting which decorates them, are subjects of just admiration and of zealous imitation by the moderns. Of this art, the fabric of pottery, the ancient authors agree in attributing the invention to this people,* and none other appears ever to have carried it to so high a pitch of perfection. Architecture, engraving of precious stones, sculpture, and painting, were of high antiquity among the Etruscans at the time when the Greeks were comparatively in a state of barbarism. The Etruscans were a declining people at the time of the foundation of Rome, though possessing many relicks of their ancient grandeur, both in their knowledge of the arts and in their manners. The Romans were more barbarians; but they had the good sense to copy after and adopt many improvements from their polished neighbors.

The country of Etruria, as we learn from Dionysius, was divided into twelve districts, each of which was ruled by a separate chief, called in the Etruscan language *Lucumo*. Of these lucumones we find frequent mention in Livy. Each had a sovereign jurisdiction in his province; but the whole were united in a confederacy, and held a general diet or council on all occasions in which the common interest was concerned. To give greater efficacy to

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* Tatianus, in his oration to the Greeks, in which he reproaches them with their vanity in attributing to themselves the invention of all arts, affirms positively that the Etruscans taught them the art of pottery. Clemens Alexandrinus makes the same assertion.

this union, it appears that, at least in time of war, the whole nation obeyed a common chief, who was elected probably by the whole of the lucumos. Livy informs us that no single state could engage in war or conclude peace without the consent of the whole Etruscan body. The principal towns of Etruria were Volscinii, Clusium, Cortona, Perusia, Faleri, Tarquinii, and Veii. These, with several others mentioned by Dionysius, were populous and flourishing states before the common era of the foundation of Rome.*

This polished people, inhabiting the centre of Italy, was surrounded by a great number of petty nations, who seem to have been in a state little removed from barbarism. The Umbrians, the Ligurians, the Sabines, the Pheenices, the Latins, appear at the time of the supposed foundation of the Roman state to have been a set of independent tribes, who were engaged in constant hostilities with each other. The territory called *Latium* extended in length about fifty miles, and in breadth about sixteen. It contained no less than forty-seven independent communities. The other adjacent provinces were divided in the same manner—a state of society in which constant warfare is unavoidable: a warfare, however, of which conquest or extension of power is not the object, but which arises merely from the spirit of plunder and depredation. Their enterprises, therefore, were limited to ravaging the fields, carrying off the flocks and herds, destroying the harvest of their neighbors, or such like rude and barbarous achievements. The desire of conquest has no place in such a state of society;—for a victory can never be pursued or the conquered territory preserved: as the whole community is obliged to be active for its subsistence, and agriculture is of course suspended while the nation is at war, the soldier must quit his arms for the plough and spade, for a lengthened campaign would produce a famine. It is only where acquired wealth and increased population can afford regular armies of professional soldiers, that conquests can be prosecuted and maintained. The Etruscans seem to have enjoyed these advantages over all the barbarous nations around them, and consequently they were in a capacity to have subdued the whole of

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*The Etruscans were, like their Phœnician ancestors, a maritime and mercantile people. Hence the fable invented by the Greeks, and sung by Ovid, that the Tyrrhenians were turned into dolphins. They colonized all along the coast of Italy, and built many large towns, during the splendid period of their history. But this was of short continuance. A dreadful pestilence and famine, as Dionysius informs us, (lib. i. c. 15, 16,) desolated their country about the period of the Trojan war. These calamities were recorded in a poem found on certain tablets of brass, called the Eugubine Tables, which were discovered A. D. 1444, in a subterraneous vault near the ancient theatre of Iguvium or Eugubium, now Gubbio, a city of Umbria. The poem is written in Pelasgian characters. This lucubration, with an interpretation by M. Gori, may be found in "Sir William Hamilton's Etruscan Antiquities;" and it is inferred from various circumstances to be 247 years more ancient than the works of Hesiod.

them; but their genius was not warlike: they were fond of and cultivated the arts of peace; and though occasionally engaged in hostilities with the Romans, they appear never to have armed but when attacked.

The gradual increase of population among a warlike tribe may enable them to preserve their conquests, either by garrisoning, or by transplanting a part of the conquered inhabitants into the capital, and replacing them by a colony of citizens. This we shall see was afterwards the policy of the Romans, and thus by degrees they extended their territory and increased their power. But sometimes a flourishing people is compelled to colonize, from an overgrowth of its population. Dionysius of Halicarnassus informs us of the manner in which a state, when it became overstocked, transplanted its colonies. They consecrated to a particular god all the youth of a certain age, furnished them with arms, and after the performance of a solemn sacrifice, dismissed them to conquer for themselves a new country. These enterprises were, no doubt, often unsuccessful; but when they succeeded, and an establishment was obtained, it does not appear that the mother state pretended to have any rights over them, or claims upon the country where they settled.

The origin of the Roman state is involved in great obscurity, and various accounts are given of the foundation of that illustrious city, which differ not only as to the time of its structure, but in all circumstances concerning it. To reconcile in some degree these discrepancies, it is the notion of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, that there were at different periods several cities which bore the name of Rome; that the Rome founded some time after the Trojan war, was destroyed, and another built in the first year of the seventh Olympiad, that is, 752 B. C.; nay, he pretends to find evidence even of a more ancient Rome than either of these, but in what situation or period of time he does not determine. Whoever wishes to see all the different accounts of this matter, and to be convinced how little certainty there is in any one of them, may consult the learned dissertations of M. Pouilly and of the Abbé Sallier, in the sixth volume of the *Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions*. The vulgar and generally received account of the foundation of Rome by Romulus is not upon the whole entitled to any degree of credit superior to the rest; but as it was commonly adopted by the Romans themselves, and has passed current down to modern times, it is proper to be acquainted with it, whatever doubt we may entertain of its authenticity.

Rome, according to the chronology of Archbishop Usher, was founded 752 years before the Christian era. Romulus, at the head of a troop of shepherds, his followers, is said to have built a few huts upon the Palatine Hill, in a part of the territory of Alba; but as it is not very probable that shepherds should assemble to the number of 3000, it is natural to suppose them to have

been banditti or freebooters, accustomed to wander and to ravage; and the increase of their numbers, while it furnished the means, probably suggested the idea of occupying and fortifying an inclosed territory for themselves. To strengthen the new community, and to fill the space which they had marked out for their city, their chief proclaimed an asylum for all such fugitives and deserters from the neighboring states as chose to put themselves under his protection, and acknowledge his authority.

Hitherto, this new association consisted solely of men; it was necessary they should provide themselves with women. The story of the rape of the Sabines has much the air of romance; though it derives a degree of credit from the festival of the *Consualia*, instituted in honor of the *god Consus*, the protector of plots; a solemnity which was always believed at Rome to have commemorated that exploit. Romulus proclaimed a great festival and games in honor of Neptune, to which he invited all the neighboring states. The Sabines,* Caenenses, Crustuminians, and Antemnates, came thither in great troops. The plan was concerted, and at a certain signal, a chosen band rushed in and carried off a great number of the women. The Sabines, and the nations in their alliance, prepared immediately to avenge this outrage; and the infant commonwealth of Rome was, almost at the moment of its formation, at war with all its neighbors.

The Roman historians, to flatter the vanity of their countrymen, have been extremely lavish of encomium on the high character of Romulus, whom they paint with all the qualities of a consummate politician and legislator. But if even the Greeks, at this time with far greater advantages, were extremely rude and uncivilized, what ideas can we form of the people of Latium, and their knowledge of the arts of government and legislation? There is certainly very little probability that a troop of banditti should all at once assume the form of a regular political structure, or that a great legislator should appear in the person of a freebooter, or of a shepherd, at the age of eighteen. The sounder opinion certainly seems to be, that those wise and politic laws and institutions, commonly ascribed to Romulus, arose gradually from ancient usages and a state of manners prevalent in Italy before the foundation of Rome.

If, however, we can suppose Romulus to have been in fact the founder of this new kingdom, its constitution would certainly prove that he had wise and politic views. He knew, in the first place,

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* The Sabines were an ancient people of Italy, situated between Etruria and Latium. Their capital was *Cures*, in the territory now called Corezze. The inhabitants of *Caenina*, *Crustuminium*, and *Antemna*, were probably either subjects or allies of the Sabine state. From Cures, the capital city of the Sabines, the Romans, after their union with that people, took the appellation of *Curites* or *Quirites*.

the character and temperament of the people he governed, and was well aware that their rude and ferocious spirit would not brook the unlimited authority of a despot. It was therefore a judicious plan to admit the people to a share in the government.

He divided the mass of population into *three tribes*, and each tribe into *ten curiæ*. Of the lands belonging to the state, he formed three great portions: one appropriated to the support of religion, which is an essential instrument of good government; another destined for the public service of the state; and the third he distributed equally among the thirty curiæ, so that each Roman citizen should have two acres of land. He formed a *senate* or council, composed of a hundred of the elders, to whom he gave power to see the laws enforced, to consult concerning all affairs of state, and to report their opinion to the people in the *comitia* or assemblies, who were invested with the right of final determination in all matters of public importance.

From these first senators (*centum patres*) chosen by Romulus, were descended those families at Rome termed *patricians*; so that in a very little time a great distinction of rank arose from birth among the Romans.

It has indeed been supposed by Dionysius, that the distinction of patricians and plebeians was anterior to the formation of the senate, and that the one title was given to the richer, and the other to the poorer class of citizens. But whence can we suppose this inequality of wealth to have arisen, when the same author admits that there was an equal distribution among the whole citizens of those lands, in which alone their wealth could consist?

Although Romulus gave great weight to the scale of the people in the framing of this new government, yet he reserved to himself, as head of the community, very ample powers. The deliberations and decrees of the senate guided the resolutions of the people, and the king had the power of removing all the senators. He had likewise the privilege of assembling the people, and a right of appeal lay to him in all questions of importance. He had the command of the army, which at first comprehended the whole body of the people. He was chief priest, too, or *pontifex maximus*, and regulated every thing that concerned or was even remotely connected with religion; and, with a very wise policy, he took care that all that regarded the rule and economy of the state was so connected.

Romulus chose for the guard of his person twelve lictors, to whom he afterwards joined a troop of 300 horsemen, named *celeres*. This was the origin of the *equites*, or Roman knights, who became the second rank in the state after the patricians. From the three tribes into which he divided the people, Romulus selected from each tribe a hundred of the handsomest of the youth, of whom he formed three companies of cavalry. This body of the

*equites* was augmented by Tarquinius Priscus to 1800; and in that distribution of the citizens which we shall afterwards see was made by Servius Tullius, these eighteen centuries were placed in the first class. These *equites* were at first chosen by the kings alone, as being the royal life-guards; and at the end of the regal government, being now a rank in the state, the consuls, who succeeded to almost the whole of the regal power, filled up the order of *equites* as they did that of the senate. In succeeding times, when the consuls became too much engrossed in military concerns, the function of supplying both these orders devolved on the censors, of whose office I shall speak more particularly when we arrive at that period when those magistrates were first instituted. The marks of distinction peculiar to the order of knights were a horse maintained at the public expense, a ring of gold, and a garment with a narrow border of purple, called *angustus clavus*, in distinction from the *latus clavus* of the senators, which had a broader border of purple. It was reckoned a great indecorum for a knight to appear in public without his proper badges. The duties and functions of the *equites* were various in different periods of the republic: they were at first only a military order, and formed the cavalry of the Roman legions; afterwards, in the time of the *gracchi*, we find them a class of civil judges, and no longer a military order. Sylla again, in his arrangement of the republic, deprived the *equites* of their judicial offices, and they became the financiers-general of the revenues of the state.

If many of those institutions we have mentioned owed their origin to the political talents of Romulus, several of them plainly appear to have a strong conformity with the general usages of barbarous nations; and others, which argue a more refined policy, were borrowed, in all probability, from the Etruscans: such in particular were those connected with religion.

The religion of ancient Italy was probably near akin to that of the Greeks; though Dionysius tells us that the early religious institutions of the Romans were not contaminated with those fables which disgraced the Greek theogony. The most scrupulous observance of omens and presages seems to have been the chief foundation of their sacred rites, and in this superstition they went far beyond the Greeks. Now divination we know with some certainty to have been adopted by the Romans from the Etruscans. Among that people every thing was construed into a presage; not only the extraordinary phenomena of nature, as thunder, lightning, the *aurora borealis*, or the like, but the most insignificant actions or accidents, such as sneezing, meeting with an animal, slipping a foot, or any of the most common occurrences of life. Among an ignorant and rude nation every thing is attributed to a supernatural agency; but the Etrurians were not a rude nation, and therefore we can assign this natural propensity only to their love of those national habits which they had derived from a remote

antiquity. To a superstitious people, when presages do not offer of themselves, it is a very natural step to go and seek them. The entrails of victims presented often different appearances, according to the accidental state of the animal at the time it was killed. The priests employed in the sacrifice, being best acquainted with those appearances, are naturally consulted as to their interpretation. Thus they acquire the reputation of superior wisdom and foresight, and the augurial art soon becomes an established profession. Where a society is once formed, it becomes interested to support itself; the trade is found lucrative, and the science of course is studiously made intricate and obscure, to exclude the attempts of uninitiated pretenders.

As bad omens presented themselves frequently as well as good, it became a desirable object of science to know how to avert the effect of the latter, and to convert them into presages of good fortune. The augurs pretended that they possessed this valuable secret, which gave them still greater influence over the minds of the people. This effect they produced by expiations, which thus became an essential branch of religious ceremonies. Gradually, as the art advanced, a particular set of ceremonies was appropriated to particular occasions. Thus, for example, at the foundation of a city, the priests and all employed in the ceremony first purified themselves by leaping over a fire. Then they made a circular excavation, into which they threw the first fruits of the season, and some handfuls of earth brought from the native city by the founders. The entrails of victims were next consulted, and if favorable, they proceeded to trace the limits of the town with a line of chalk. This track they then marked by a furrow, with a plough drawn by a white bull and heifer. It was not anciently the custom to surround the city with walls, but the limits were defended by towers, placed at regular intervals. In after times, however, the practice became common of fortifying the city by a wall. The ceremony was concluded by a great sacrifice to the tutelar gods of the city, who were solemnly invoked. These gods were termed *Patrii* and *Indigetes*, but their particular names were concealed with the most anxious caution from the knowledge of the people. It was a very prevalent superstitious belief that no city could be taken or destroyed till its tutelar gods abandoned it. Hence it was the first care of a besieging enemy to evoke the gods of the city or entice them out by ceremonies, by promising them superior temples and festivals, and a more respectful worship than they had hitherto enjoyed; but in order to accomplish this evocation, it was necessary to learn the particular names of the deities, which every people therefore was interested to keep secret.

As all the superstitions we have mentioned were common to the nations of Italy before the building of Rome, it was extremely natural that they should be adopted as part of its theology.

In treating formerly of the Spartan constitution, I have remarked the error of those theories which attempt to trace all political institutions whatever up to the manners of a savage state; or the belief that all forms of government, and, by the same rule, all the revolutions of those governments, are the result of the natural progress of mankind in society. The most limited knowledge of history gives us certain proof of many political systems being the operation of the genius of individual lawgivers. If we doubt as to the institutions of Lycurgus, of Charlemagne, or of Alfred, being as perfect as history has painted them, skepticism itself cannot refuse the instances of William Penn and of Peter the Great, any more than those stupendous experiments in government and legislation which our own age has witnessed.

But as to Romulus, we readily allow that the great outlines of his constitution have their model in the manners and usages of a semi-barbarous people. The *patria potestas* of the Romans, or the sovereign power which every father of a family enjoyed over his household, may be plainly traced up to the manners of barbarians. So likewise many of the early laws of the Romans were the necessary result of their situation. Such, for example, was that law which confined the practice of all mechanic arts to the slaves; for all the free citizens must either have been employed in warfare or in the culture of their fields.

But other institutions bear the stamp of political knowledge and enlargement of ideas. Such, for instance, is the *Clientela*, or the connection of patrons and clients. To maintain a just subordination, and at the same time a mutual good understanding between the patrician order and the plebeians, every plebeian was allowed to choose a senator for his patron, whose duty it was to defend and protect him; and he in his turn received from his clients, not only homage, but support and assistance in all cases where his interest required it.

Notwithstanding the excellency of this political arrangement, the enemies which the infant state of Rome had raised up among the neighboring nations of Italy would have been too powerful for her, if they had followed any united plan or general measures. The rape of the Sabine women had exasperated all around them; but as each nation, instead of uniting, attempted to pursue a separate plan of revenge, they were all successively defeated. The town of Cenina was destroyed, and its inhabitants transplanted to Rome. The Crustumenians, in like manner, contributed to increase the victorious city; though Romulus chose likewise to preserve their own city, and to establish a colony in it, thus gaining a double advantage. The Sabine nation was the most formidable of their enemies. In one successful assault upon the city, they had penetrated as far as the Tarpeian hill, and a most obstinate conflict was maintained in the very heart of Rome, when the Sabine women, the cause of the war, threw themselves in be-

tween the contending parties, and became the mediators between their husbands, and their fathers and brethren. Their influence prevailed; a peace was concluded, and the two nations agreed henceforth to become one people.* Tatius, king of the Sabines, was associated with Romulus in the government: a most wise and politic measure, which relieved Rome at once of her most formidable enemy, and greatly increased her strength and population. Thus, in a very few years from the period of her foundation, Rome was able to make head against the most powerful of the nations of Italy.

Tatius did not long enjoy his dignity. He was killed a few years afterwards at Lavinium, and Romulus remained sole monarch of the united people. He made war against the Veientes with success, and subdued several of the states of Latium: but having distributed his soldiers to the occupation of the conquered lands, and some of the principal senators becoming jealous of his power, a conspiracy was formed against him, and he fell a victim to treason, in the thirty-seventh year of his reign. A violent storm of thunder happening at the time, favored the report spread by the conspirators, that he was killed by lightning; and the people, who revered his memory, enrolled him among the number of their deities, by the title of Quirinus.†

As Romulus left no children, the people judged the crown elective, and the question was whom to choose. The Sabines claimed an equal right with the Romans; and, there being much discordance of opinion, the senate, which was composed equally of both nations, laid claim to the sovereignty, and dividing themselves into Decuriæ, it was agreed that each decuria should reign fifty days, or each senator five days,—an arrangement which it was easy to see could not be permanent. The people submitted to it for a year, but at the end of that period declared their resolution to have a sovereign for life. It was agreed that the senators of the Roman party should have the right of electing, but that the choice should fall upon a Sabine. Numa, the son-in-law of Tatius, a man of a recluse and reserved disposition, but of great reputation for wisdom and probity, was chosen king; and after a solemn consultation of the gods by the augurs and aruspices, was publicly invested with the regal *insignia* and authority.

Dionysius of Halicarnassus has represented Numa as a wise and most intelligent prince: others have disputed that character, on this extraordinary ground, that when the books of Numa were

* In honor of this event, a solemn annual festival was held at Rome on the first day of March, called *Matronalia*. It is to this solemnity that Horace alludes in his ode, *Martiis cœlebs quid agam Calendis*, &c.

† Contemporary with Romulus was Hezekiah, the tenth king of Judah; and Salmanazar, who took Samaria, and put an end to the kingdom of Israel, by carrying the ten tribes into captivity.

accidentally discovered at Rome, after a lapse of six centuries, the senate ordered them to be destroyed, as containing nothing which, in their judgment, could be useful, and much that might be of prejudice to the state. But this fact certainly warrants no inference unfavorable to the character or to the talents of Numa. The political views and regulations of that prince might be extremely wise, and well adapted to the age in which he lived, and at the same time quite unsuitable to the spirit of the Roman constitution six centuries after him.

Numa was of a pacific turn, and he seems to have aimed at giving his people the same character. It may be doubted whether this policy were altogether wise in the situation in which the Romans stood with respect to their neighbors. The king pretended to enjoy a divine inspiration, and feigned that he was indulged in nightly conferences with the nymph Egeria, who dictated all those public measures which he proposed. He multiplied the national gods, built new temples, and instituted a great variety of religious ceremonies, of the most remarkable of which it is necessary, for the proper intelligence of the Roman history, that some short account should here be given.

A custom then prevalent in Italy, by which every state, before going to war, was in use to determine whether the cause of the war were just or unjust. When a quarrel arose between one state and another, certain heralds, named *Fetiales*, were despatched by the state which deemed itself injured to the aggressor, who publicly proclaimed the cause of offence, and demanded reparation of the injury. If the aggressor hesitated, ten days were allowed for deliberation, and that term was three times renewed. If at the end of that period justice was not done, the *Fetiales* took the gods to witness of the wrong committed, and returned to their own city. War was then solemnly proclaimed, but was not commenced till one of the *Fetiales* walked to the frontier, and threw a bloody javelin as a signal.

This custom shows that the petty nations of Italy, barbarous as they were, had just notions of the blessings of a pacific government. Numa adopted the custom, and instituted at Rome a college of *Fetiales*. He built, likewise, a temple to *Janus*, which was kept open during war, and shut during peace. Most of the institutions of this prince were calculated to encourage the pacific spirit; but this was not the tendency of his people, and their character soon became quite the reverse. A great part of Numa's policy consisted in using religion as an instrument of government.*

* Yet the religion of Numa, according to Plutarch's account, was of a rational character, and quite remote from the superstitions of the vulgar. "He forbade the Romans," says that author, "to represent the Deity in the form of man, or of any animal, nor was there any sculptured effigy of the gods admitted in those early times. During the first one hundred and sixty years, they

He instituted a college of priests called *Flamines*, from the flame-colored tufts upon their caps.* Each flamen was confined to the worship of a peculiar god; and Romulus, now deified, had his flamen, as well as Jupiter and Mars. A sacred buckler, or *ancile*, which was said to have dropped from heaven, gave occasion likewise to the foundation of a new college of priests, who had the charge of it, and paraded with it, on particular occasions, in a kind of dance or procession. These were called Salii (*a saliendo*); and, lest the sacred buckler should be stolen or lost, eleven others were made, exactly resembling it, and deposited in the temple of Jupiter.‡

The veneration of *fire* was a superstition common, as we have seen, to several of the ancient nations. The custom of preserving this element continually burning was religiously observed among the nations of Italy, as among their eastern progenitors. Numa found this custom among the people of Alba; and introducing it among the Romans, he built a temple consecrated to Vesta, and appointed four virgins to attend her worship and to preserve the sacred fire. They took a vow of perpetual virginity, and were buried alive if they broke it. A punishment of this kind was extremely rare; but when it occurred it was a day of mourning to all the citizens. The calamity of the crime was thought to affect all the relations of the criminal; and it was no wonder that, when a new vestal came to be chosen, every father dreaded lest the choice should fall upon his daughter. On the other hand, these sacred virgins enjoyed very high privileges. They were superior in sanctity of character to all the priests, and in some respects even controlled the laws of their country. A vestal could save a criminal going to execution, provided she gave her word that she had met him only accidentally. It was customary for individuals to make large donations to vestals from motives of piety, or to leave them great legacies; and thus they often accumulated much wealth.

Numa is celebrated for a reformation of the Roman calendar, which, it is said, made the year, before his time, consist only of

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built temples and shrines, but made no images; judging it impious to represent the most excellent of Beings by things base and unworthy, since there is no access to the Divinity but by the mind, elevated and purified by divine contemplation."

* Plutarch supposes the word *flamen* a corruption of *pilamen*, from *pilus*, a cap. There were at first only three Flamines, *Flamen Dialis*, *Martialis*, and *Quirinalis*.

† The *Salii* were originally twelve in number; but Tullus Hostilius, the successor of Numa, added other twelve. Those first instituted were called Salli Palatini, from the Palatine Hill, where they began their processions: the latter were termed *Collini*, or Agonenses, from the *Colis Quirinalis*, otherwise called *Agonalis*, where they had a chapel. Their endowments were great, and their entertainments costly; whence the phrase *Dapes Saliares* is used by Horace for delicate meats, lib. i. O. 37.

ten months, of various lengths; some of them, according to Plutarch, consisting of twenty days, some of thirty-five, and some of a greater number. Numa added to the year the months of January and February, assigning to each month the number of days of which it consists at present. February being the most deficient, was always reckoned an unlucky month. He distinguished likewise certain days as *Fasti* and *Nefasti*; on the former of which it was lawful to follow all civil occupations, while nothing of that sort was allowed on the latter except agriculture, which thence seems most wisely to have been regarded in a religious point of view. From this distinction of *Dies Fasti et Nefasti*, the calendar itself took the name of *Fasti*, or annals. It was the office of the Pontifex Maximus to record in the *Fasti* the events of each year.

Numa died after a reign of forty-three years, during the whole of which time the temple of Janus remained shut; so much does the disposition of a people depend on the character of a sovereign.*

After a short interregnum, Tullus Hostilius was elected to the throne by the people, and confirmed by the voice of the senate. This prince, of a very opposite character from his predecessor, paid little regard to his religious and pacific institutions. The temple of Janus was opened, and was not shut during his whole reign. He was victorious over the Albani, Fidenates, and several of the other neighboring states. In the war with the Albani happened the celebrated combat between the three Horatii and Curiatii, in which the issue of the contest was determined in favor of the Romans, by the courage and policy of the surviving Horatius. The victor, returning to Rome laden with the spoils of the vanquished, was met by his sister, the destined spouse of one of the Curiatii. On seeing the spoils of her dead lover, she vented her grief and indignation in such violent terms, that her brother put her to death. "Be gone," said he, "to thy lover, and carry with thee that degenerate passion which makes thee prefer a dead enemy to the glory of thy country." The offender was brought before the *duumviri*, two criminal judges appointed by Tullus, and was by them condemned to death. By the advice of Tullus, he appealed to the assembly of the people, who, in compassion to the deliverer of his country, commuted his punishment to passing under the yoke, and at the same time decreed him a trophy. This incident shows one fact of importance, namely, that the power of the people had at this time become paramount to that of the prince, and that the government truly lay in the joint concurrence of the regal authority with that of the several orders of the state.

* Contemporary with Numa, was Sennacherib, king of Assyria, and Esarhaddon, who united the kingdoms of Assyria and Babylon.

Under the reign of Tullus, as we find the Romans at war with the Sabines, it appears that the union of the two nations was by this time dissolved; and, henceforward, we find the Sabines classed among those of the neighbouring states with whom the Romans carried on constant hostilities.

The neglect of religion during the reign of Tullus is said to have excited the vengeance of the gods, who punished the Romans by a severe pestilence. The king himself was seized with it, and became as pious as his predecessor; but his repentance was too late, for he was killed by thunder, or as some authors report, by a fire in the city, after a reign of thirty-three years.

Ancus Martius, of Sabine extraction, was elected king in his place. He was, by his mother, grandson to Numa; and partook somewhat of his disposition. He bent all his attention to the revival of the religious observances of his ancestor; but the Latins obliged him to take up arms. The Romans were victorious, and took several of the enemy's towns, transporting the inhabitants to Rome, of which it became necessary to enlarge the bounds beyond the Aventine Mount. Ancus pushed his conquests along the banks of the Tiber, to its mouth, where he built the city and port of Ostia. He fortified a small eminence opposite to Rome, on the western side of the Tiber, which was called *Janiculum*, and communicated with the city by a bridge, which the priests had the charge of supporting and repairing; and thence they are said to have derived their name of *Pontifices*.*

Ancus died after a reign of twenty-four years. During his time, *Lucius Tarquinius*, surnamed *Priscus*, a native of Tarquinii in Etruria, and son of a rich citizen of Corinth, had come to Rome. He was a man of great address, and gained the favor both of the king and people; so that when the throne became vacant, he was chosen the successor of Ancus; a proof that the throne was considered as elective; for Ancus Martius had left two sons.

The senate, as first constituted by Romulus, consisted, as we have seen, of one hundred members. To this original number, from whom alone the patrician families claimed their descent, Romulus afterwards added another hundred. Tarquinius, who owed his election to the favor of some of the principal citizens, rewarded their services by adding a hundred new members to the senate, chosen from the plebeian order.† It remained at the number of 300 for several centuries, down to the period of the

* Contemporary with Ancus Martius were Draco, the Athenian legislator; Periander, tyrant of Corinth, and Nabopolassar, king of Babylon, father to Nebuchadnezzar.

† These new senators were termed *Patres minorum gentium*; but this distinction was lost in process of time, and all were regarded as equal in point of rank.

Gracchi, when it was enlarged to 600. I shall have occasion afterwards to treat more particularly of the constitution of this body.

Rome was now gradually advancing in population and power; but her progress was not so rapid as to alarm the other states of Italy. In the time of the elder Tarquin there were frequent wars with the Sabines, Latins, and Etruscans, which generally terminated to the advantage of the Romans: but the vanquished nations were always very speedily in a condition to renew hostilities.

The city itself was increasing very much in extent and magnificence. Tarquin caused the walls to be built of hewn stone; he surrounded the *forum* with a covered corridore or arcades of pillars; he built the Circus Maximus, or Hippodrome, for the celebration of public games, for races and athletic exercises. This building was situated between the Aventine and Palatine hills. It was enlarged and embellished at different times; and in the age of the elder Pliny, was capable of containing 260,000 spectators, all seated. Tarquinius Priscus likewise constructed the *cloacæ*, those amazing drains or common sewers, which remain to this day the wonder of all who view them. The *cloaca maxima* is sixteen feet in width, thirteen in depth, and of hewn stone arched over. Works of this kind would seem to lead to the belief of a prodigious increase of this city in size and population, when such immense structures were formed within the period of 150 years from its foundation. But these appearances certainly afford rational ground for a different conclusion or conjecture. The immensity of those *cloacæ*, so unsuitable to such a city as we must suppose Rome to have been in the days of the elder Tarquin (for Livy acknowledges that they were judged unsuitable, from their large size, to the extent of the city, even in his time), naturally induces a suspicion, that those works were the remains of a more ancient and much more splendid city, on the ruins of which the followers of Romulus had chosen to settle. The like we know to have taken place in different parts of Asia, where several of the greatest cities of antiquity, after they had gone to decay, and been for ages desolate and uninhabited, have revived after a period of many centuries, and from villages grafted on their ruins, have become pretty considerable towns, though far inferior to their ancient size and magnificence. Were we here to offer a conjecture, it would be, that the foundation of Rome is to be carried back many ages beyond the commonly received era, and that this city had anciently been the residence of a part of that great and polished nation, the Etruscans.

Tarquin, during some of his wars, had vowed to erect a temple to Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva; but he lived only to see the work begun. In digging for the foundation of this structure, on the top of the Tarpeian hill, the skull of a man was found;—a very

ordinary occurrence, but which the augurs declared to be a presage that Rome was one day to become the head, or mistress of the universe. The new temple was from this incident called *Capitolium*. If the anecdote is true, it shows how early the Romans entertained views of empire and dominion.

Tarquin had adopted a young man, Servius, the son of a female captive, and had given him his daughter in marriage. He was a youth of talents, and soon gained the esteem both of the senators and people; so that there was every prospect of his succeeding to the throne upon the death of his father-in-law. Two sons of Ancus Martius were yet alive, who naturally looked likewise towards that dignity, to which they endeavored to pave the way by assassinating Tarquinius Priscus. This treasonable act they perpetrated in the thirty-eighth year of his reign: but their crime did not meet with the reward of success.*

## CHAPTER II.

SERVIUS TULLIUS, sixth King of Rome—His Political Talents—Artful division of the People into Classes and Centuries—The Census—Lustrum—Tarquinius Superbus—End of the Regal government—Reflections on this Period—Constitution of the Senate—Narrow Territory of the State—Exaggerated Accounts of its Military Force—Uncertainty of its Early History.

SERVIUS TULLIUS had very naturally cherished the ambitious design of mounting the throne, upon the death of his father-in-law. On that event, he thought it prudent to employ some artifice. He gave out, that the king, though dangerously wounded, was still alive, and had empowered him, in the meantime, to administer the government, and to bring to punishment his assassins. He procured, accordingly, a sentence of death to be pronounced on the sons of Ancus; but they escaped their fate by flying from Rome, and seeking an asylum among the Volscinians. Servius, thus rid of his competitors, proclaimed the king's death, and found no obstacle to his elevation to the vacant dignity.

* In the time of the elder Tarquin, Nebuchadnezzar made the conquest of Jerusalem, and carried the Jews into captivity. Solon, in the same period, was employed in new modelling the constitution, and giving laws to the republic of Athens.

As the succession of Servius had wanted all the usual formalities, there having been no regular election by the people, nor any inauguration by the usual consultation of the auspices, the new sovereign would bend his whole attention to ingratiating himself with his subjects by every method that could procure popularity. He paid the debts of the poorer citizens by dividing among them such lands as were his own property, and others of which they had been illegally deprived by the richer citizens. He adorned the city with useful edifices; he was successful in the wars carried on with the neighbouring nations; and the people, pleased with the moderation he showed in the exercise of power, soon forgot his usurpation.

It is remarked by Montesquieu, as one cause of the rapid advancement of Rome in the best ages of her state, that all her kings were great men. Servius Tullius was a prince possessed of superior political abilities. There is nothing more worthy of attention than the measures which he took for the reformation of those abuses which had so closely arisen from the indeterminate nature of the Roman constitution, and particularly that unfair and ungenious arrangement of the people into classes and centuries, by which he contrived to throw the whole power of the state into the hands of the superior order of citizens, without injury or offence to a numerous populace, whose happiness is best consulted by removing them from all actual concern in the machine of government. Of this arrangement it is necessary for the proper intelligence of the revolutions of the Roman commonwealth that a particular account should here be given.

From the time that the Romans had associated the Sabines and the people of Alba to the rights of citizens, the urban and the rustic tribes were composed of three distinct nations, each of which had an equal share in the government. Each tribe being divided into ten *curiæ*, and each *curia* having an equal vote in the comitia or public assemblies, as every individual had in his *curia*, all questions were determined by the majority of the suffrages of individuals. There was no precedence or distinction between the *curiæ*, and the order in which they gave their votes was determined by lot.

This was a very equitable and reasonable arrangement so long as there were few distinctions among the citizens, and no great inequality of fortunes. But when riches came to be unequally distributed, it was easy to foresee numberless inconveniences from this equality of power. The indigent or the worthless would court every revolution which gave them a chance of bettering their fortunes; and the rich had an easy road to the gratification of the most dangerous ambition by purchasing with bribes the votes of the poor.

One grievance, likewise, which was very severely felt under the former constitution, was, that all taxes were paid by the head,

without regard to the unequal wealth of individuals. This impolitic and unjust distribution, of which the poor had the highest reason to complain, furnished Servius with an excellent pretence for effecting that reformation which he meditated. He undertook to remove easily the poorer citizens from all share in the government, by exempting them from all public burdens, and making these fall solely on the rich.

After explaining to the people at large the necessity as well as the justice of regulating the taxes and contributions of individuals according to their measure of wealth, he required, by a public edict, that each citizen should declare, upon oath, his name, his dwelling, the number of his children, their age, and the value of his whole property, under the penalty of having his goods confiscated, being publicly scourged, and sold for a slave.

After this numeration, which was called *census*, Servius divided the whole body of the citizens, without distinction of rank, birth, or nation, into *four tribes*, named, from the quarters where they dwelt, *Palatine*, *Suburran*, *Collatine* and *Esquiline*. These comprehended only such as dwelt within the city. He formed other *tribes* of such as enjoyed the privilege of Roman citizens, but lived without the walls, or in the country. Of these the number is uncertain, some writers making the rustic tribes amount to fifteen, others to seventeen, and others again to twenty-six. The number probably varied, according as the Romans extended their frontier. These rustic tribes are frequently mentioned in the Roman history. It is only necessary to remark at present, that in early times it was less honourable to be inrolled in those of the city; but this distinction did not always continue.

Besides this local division from the places where the different citizens had their dwelling-houses, Servius divided the whole body of the people into *six classes*, and each class into several *centuries*; but these classes did not each contain the same number of centuries. It is to be observed that a century was so termed, not as in itself consisting of one hundred men, but as being obliged to furnish and to maintain that number of soldiers for the service of the state, in time of war. In the first class there were no less than ninety-eight centuries. These were the richest citizens; such as were worth at least 100 *minæ*, about 300*l.* sterling. The second class consisted of twenty-two centuries, and comprehended such as were worth 75 *minæ*, about 225*l.* sterling. The third class contained twenty centuries, of such as were worth 50 *minæ*, or 150*l.* sterling. The fourth, of twenty-two centuries, or such as were worth half that sum: and in the fifth were thirty centuries, of those worth 12 *minæ*, or 36*l.* sterling. The last class, though the most numerous of the whole, formed but a single century; and under this class were comprehended all the poor citizens. Thus the whole body of the Roman people was divided into one hundred and ninety-three centuries—or portions of citi-

zens so termed, as furnishing and supporting each one hundred soldiers in time of war. The last class, the poor citizens, were exempted from all taxes and public burdens; they were called *Capite Censi*, as only making up a number; or were sometimes termed *Proletarii*, as contributing to the use of the state only by raising progeny. The other classes were rated for their proportions of the public taxes, at so much for each century. The military centuries of the different classes formed certain bodies of distinct rank; those of the first class being the highest, and those of the last the lowest; they were distinguished likewise by the arms they bore. The one-half of each century of soldiers, namely, those above forty-five years of age, were reserved for the protection of the city.

It was very evident that the poorer citizens had no reason to complain of this new establishment, which exempted the greater part from all taxes, and proportioned the burdens of the rest to their share of wealth; but there was something necessary to indemnify and compensate the rich. For this purpose, Servius ordained that in future the people should be assembled and give their votes by centuries; the first class, consisting of ninety-eight centuries, always having the precedence in voting. Such was the arrangement of the *Comitia Centuriata*, in which, henceforward, the chief magistrates were elected, the laws framed, peace and war resolved on, and, in a word, in which the supreme power of the state was vested. The *Comitia Curiata*, where the people were assembled by *Curiæ*, were now held only for the election of some of the priests, and a few of the inferior magistrates. The *Comitia* were held in the *Campus Martius*, without the city. The people walked thither preceded by their officers and *insignia*, in all the order of a military procession, but without arms. The king alone had the power of calling these assemblies, after consulting the auspices.

As in the *Comitia Centuriata* all the centuries, or the whole body of the people, were called to the assembly, the whole of the citizens seemed to have an equal share in the public deliberations. Yet this was far from being the case. The poorer classes came necessarily to be deprived of all influence in the public measures: for as there were in all the six classes one hundred and ninety-three centuries, and the first class consisted of no less than ninety-eight of these, who always gave their votes first, if these were of one mind, which generally happened in important questions, the suffrages of the rest were of no avail, and were not asked. If the first class was not unanimous, the second came to have a vote; but there was very rarely any opportunity for the inferior classes to exercise their right of suffrage. Thus the whole power of the state was artfully removed from the body of the people at large to the richer classes; and such was the ingenuity of this policy, that all were pleased with it. The rich were willing to pay for their

influence in the state, and the poor were glad to exchange authority for immunities. They were satisfied with the appearance of consequence which they enjoyed by being called to the *Comitia*; and it was not till ambitious men, to use them as instruments for their own designs, rendered them jealous of their situation, that they began to express any discontent.

The *Census* was concluded by a ceremony called *Lustrum*, or an expiation. The king presided at the sacrifice of a bull, a ram, and a hog, which were first led three times round the Campus Martius. Hence the sacrifice was called *Suovetaurilia*, or sometimes *Taurilia*. It was performed every *five* years, and thence that period was termed *Lustrum*.

Religion had been the earliest bond of union among the states of Greece. Temples had been erected at the common charge of the different republics, which accustomed them to consider themselves as one nation. After this model Servius undertook to unite the states of Latium. In order that they might regard Rome as a metropolis, he persuaded them to build at their common charges a magnificent temple to Diana on the Aventine Mount, and to repair thither once a year to perform sacrifice. Thus the Romans contracted a strict alliance with the Latian states, which mainly contributed to increase their power. Servius was a genuine and enlightened patriot. In all the changes which he effected in the constitution of the state, he had no other end than the public good. Of the disinterested nature of his conduct he had prepared to give the most effectual demonstration, by resigning the crown and returning to the condition of a private citizen, when, to the regret of his subjects, he fell a victim to the most atrocious treason. His infamous daughter, Tullia, married to Tarquinius, the grandson of Priscus, conspired with her husband to dethrone and put to death her father; and this excellent prince was assassinated, after a reign of forty-four years.

Tarquinius had gained the throne by the foulest of crimes, and he resolved to secure himself in it by violence. He acquired from his manners the surname of *Superbus*, pride being the usual attendant of tyranny and cruelty. Montesquieu has attempted to vindicate the character of this tyrant, and even to eulogize his virtues, as Lord Orford has displayed his talents in a vindication of our English Tarquin, Richard III., and both with nearly the same success. We may admire the ingenuity of the advocate who tries his powers in such arduous attempts, but we cannot judge them entitled to praise. Let the man of ingenuity stand forth as the champion of virtue, which too often suffers from the envenomed tooth of envy and detraction. In this benevolent office he will find abundant scope and exercise for his talents; but to lessen the criminality of the avowedly vicious—to exculpate from one or from a few slight offences where the blackest crimes have deservedly consigned a character to infamy—in such attempts there is much

demerit: for the salutary horror of vice is thus weakened and diminished, and virtue herself is defrauded by lessening the value of her just reward.

The government of Tarquinius was regulated by principles totally opposite to those of his predecessor. He was in every sense a despot. With considerable military talents, he was successful in his wars against the Volsci and Sabines, the Latins of Gabii, and other enemies of the Roman state: and he used these conquests to ingratiate himself with the soldiery, to whom he allowed free scope to ravage and plunder in the course of hostilities; but the daily encroachments which he made on the liberties of all ranks in the state, and the extreme severity and cruelty he displayed in support of an arbitrary control, soon rendered him the object of universal detestation. The most powerful of the citizens, who, from their influence with the people, excited the fears and jealousy of the tyrant, were on various pretences arraigned and put to death. Others, against whom there was no pretext for a judicial accusation, were privately assassinated. Thus he put to death the father and the brother of *Lucius Junius*, two of the most respectable of the citizens. Lucius himself, to escape a similar fate, counterfeited fatuity, and thence acquired the denomination of *Brutus*.

This most sanguinary tyrant, whose enormous offences daily called for vengence from an injured people, was yet suffered to reign for twenty-four years, and was at length punished for a crime which was not his own. His son Sextus, equally lawless and flagitious, had committed a rape on Lucretia, the wife of Collatinus, and the injured matron, unable to survive her dishonor, stabbed herself in the presence of her husband and kindred. Brutus, a witness to this shocking scene, drew the dagger from her breast, and swore by the eternal gods to be the avenger of her death—an oath immediately taken by all who were present. The dead body of the violated Lucretia was brought into the forum, and Brutus, throwing off his assumed disguise of insanity, appeared the passionate advocate of a just revenge, and the animated orator in the cause of liberty against tyrannical oppression. The people were roused in a moment, and were prompt and unanimous in their procedure. Tarquinius was at this time absent from the city, engaged in a war with the Rutulians. The senate was assembled, and pronounced a decree which banished for ever the tyrant, and at the same time utterly abolished the name and office of king. This decree was immediately confirmed by the people in the Comitia, who at the same time added to it a tremendous sanction, devoting to the infernal gods every Roman who should by word or deed endeavor to counteract or invalidate it.

Such was the end of the regal government at Rome, which had subsisted for 244 years. On this first period of the Roman history I shall here offer a few reflections.

The constitution of the Roman government was at first nominally monarchical; but in fact the kings of Rome seem to have enjoyed but a very moderate share of those powers which ordinarily attend the monarchical government. We have seen that the regal dignity was elective, and that the choice resided in the people. It was the senate who most frequently proposed the laws, but it was the people in their Comitia who ratified them; nor could the king, without the consent of the people, proclaim war or peace. These rights of the people we find acknowledged by the people without dispute; nor does it appear, till the reign of the last Tarquin, that any attempts were made, upon the part of the throne, to extend the monarchical authority so limited and restrained.

A constitution thus interpreted is not naturally the result of the first union of a savage tribe; and hence has arisen the idea of extraordinary political abilities in the founder of this monarchy, Romulus, to whom several writers have chosen to attribute the whole formation of a system which it is more reasonable to believe was the slow growth of time and of experience. With these writers, no lawgiver is supposed to have ever proceeded upon a more extensive acquaintance with the nature of the political establishments of different states, or a juster estimate of their merits and defects, than Romulus, a youth of eighteen, in that system of regulations which he laid down for those rude shepherds or robbers whom he is said to have assembled and formed into a community.

These romantic notions have, I believe, originated in a great measure from an incident reason on the account of the origin of the Roman state given by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, whose work, however ingenious, and in many respects estimable, is by no means to be relied on as a sure authority in tracing the early history of Rome, which he himself confesses that he has founded chiefly upon ancient fables, treated with neglect or passed over by other writers. Indeed the fables which he relates carry their own confutation along with them; for what fiction can be more absurd and incredible than to suppose an ignorant and rude youth, the leader of a gang of banditti, or the chief of a troop of shepherds, immediately after he had reared the turf walls of his projected city, calling together his followers, and delivering a labored and methodical oration on the nature of the different kinds of government, such as he had heard existed in Greece and other nations, desiring his hearers seriously to weigh the advantages and defects of those different political constitutions, and modestly concluding with a declaration that he is ready to accede with cheerfulness to whatever form they, in their aggregate wisdom, may decree? On this absurd fiction Dionysius rears the structure of a finely attempered constitution, all at once framed and adopted by this troop of barbarians; a beautiful system, judiciously blending

monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy. Dionysius, however, has, with singular injudiciousness, discredited his own authority, by making a foolish parade of the motives which induced him to compile his history. He owns that his chief object was to render his work a pleasing and popular composition; something that might flatter the pride of the Romans, and inspire his own countrymen, the Greeks, with a high idea of the dignity of their conquerors. "The Greeks," says he, "deceived by vulgar report, imagined that the founders of Rome were barbarians, and vagabonds without house or home, and those too the slaves and dependents of their leader. To efface these impressions from the minds of my countrymen, and engage them to entertain more just notions, so as not to repine at being subject to a people who, from superiority of merit, have a natural right to the dominion over all others, I undertake this work. Let them cease to accuse fortune of this dispensation, since it is agreeable to an eternal law of nature that the strong should be the rulers of the weak. My countrymen will now learn from history that Rome had scarcely sprung into existence when she began to produce myriads of men, than whom no state, either Grecian or barbarian, ever reared more pious, more just, more temperate, more brave, or more skilful in war.—But these wonderful men, (continues he,) are unknown to the Greeks from the want of an historian worthy to record their merits."* It will be readily allowed that a preface of this nature is not fitted to increase our opinion either of the truth, the candor, or even the judgment of the historian.

To return:—The notions, therefore, which some modern writers, relying on the authority of Dionysius, have adopted, of the wonderful political talents of Romulus, and that jealous temperament he is supposed to have made between the power of the sovereign, the authority of the senate, and the rights of the people, seem to be little else than a chimæra. The first political institutions of the Roman state were, like those of every other, simple and inartificial; suited to the immediate wants, and corresponding to the exigencies of a rude tribe, first forming itself into a regular community; but of whom, individual members had probably been the exiles or fugitives from a state enjoying some degree of civilization, and subject to laws and institutions, which they were thus enabled to impart to the new society they had agreed to form, and of which they had chosen Romulus to be the chief, or sovereign. The fabric of the Roman government, such as we find it within the period of any history we can deem authentic, was, like every other, the gradual result of circumstances, the fruit of time and of political emergency.

The early constitution of the Roman senate has given occasion

* Dionys. Hal., Ant. Rom., lib. i.

to much learned disquisition. The most judicious writers have candidly confessed, that, with regard to the original mode of electing its members, they pretend to nothing more than conjecture; as the ancient authors have been sparing in their information, extremely obscure, and often contradictory in their accounts. The most probable opinion seems to be that of the Abbé Vertot—that, during the regal government, the kings had the sole right of nominating the senators; that the consuls succeeded them in this power; and that, when these magistrates became too much engaged in war to attend to domestic policy, that privilege devolved upon the censors. The senators were, at first, always chosen out of the order of the patricians; that is, out of those families descended from the first *Centum Patres* who are supposed to have been named by Romulus. But afterwards, the right of election to that dignity became common to the people and was among the first of those privileges to which they obtained an equal title with the patricians. The authority of the senate, in the first ages of the commonwealth, was very extensive. No assembly of the people could be held but in consequence of their decree; nor could such assembly take any matter under consideration that had not first been debated in the senate. It was even necessary, in order to give the *Plebiscita*, or *decrees of the people*, any effect, that they should be confirmed by a second decree of the senate; and hence, with apparent justice, the government of the Romans, during the earlier times of the Republic, has been termed rather an *aristocracy* than a democracy.

From this exorbitant power of the senate the first diminutions were made by the tribunes of the people, as we shall soon see; but this was not without a violent and lasting struggle on the part of the senate to maintain what had been their original rights: those privileges, however, which remained always in the senate, and which the people never pretended to call in question, were very extensive. The senate always continued to have the direction of every thing that regarded religion, they had the custody of the public treasure, and the absolute disposal of it: they gave audience to ambassadors, decided the fate of vanquished nations, disposed of the governments of the provinces, and took cognizance, by appeal, of all crimes committed throughout the empire. In one particular, upon great emergencies, their authority was truly supreme and despotical. In times of imminent danger, the senate issued its decree, *Dent operam Consules, ne quid Respublica detrimenti capiat*; a decree which gave to those chief magistrates a supreme and unlimited power for the time, independent both of the senate which conferred it, and of the people. Such were the acknowledged powers of the Roman senate through the whole period of the commonwealth. It was, in fact, a perpetual council, whose province it was to superintend all the magistrates of the state, and

to watch over the safety of the republic. Yet in the more advanced times of the commonwealth, the senate always made a show of acknowledging the last, or executive power to be lodged in the people; *Senatus consult, populus jussit:* although this may fairly be supposed to be nothing more than a piece of affected moderation: since we know that they retained the full exercise of those powers we have mentioned, even after all the encroachments of the people, down to the times of the Gracchi, (A. U. C. 620,) when their authority suffered, indeed, a great abridgment.

Towards the end of the regal government, the territory belonging to the Roman state was extremely limited. It is said to have been only forty miles in length and thirty in breadth. The progress of the Romans in extending their frontier was at first extremely slow. Time was requisite for subduing nations as warlike as themselves: and the methods both of making conquests and preserving them were little known. This was the reason why the first care of the Romans, most wisely, was to strengthen themselves in their possessions. It would have weakened them too much had they early attempted to extend their boundaries. The only use they yet made of their victories was to naturalize the inhabitants of some of the conquered states, and thus increase their population. By this way of increase they became a powerful state, though within a narrow territory; because their strength was always superior to their enterprises. They derived, likewise, from the small extent of their leads, a spirit of moderation and frugality. It was thus they paved the way for extending their limits afterwards with advantage; and this judicious policy of choosing at first to possess rather too small than too extensive a territory, laid the solid foundation of their future greatness.

But with regard to the real forces or strength both of the Romans and of their rival states in those early times, we are, on the whole, extremely ignorant. The Roman historians appear to have exaggerated greatly in these particulars. We find in those authors, that, notwithstanding very bloody engagements, the Romans, as well as their enemies—the Latins, Sabines, Æqui, and Volsci—take the field next campaign with armies still more numerous than before. Yet the cities and territories which furnished those armies were extremely inconsiderable. The country to which they belonged was not remarkable for its fertility: and in such a state of perpetual warfare, the inhabitants, constantly intent on ravaging and pillaging, could not possibly cultivate it to advantage. We have every reason, therefore, to believe that the numbers of those armies said to have been brought into the field are greatly exaggerated.

The frequent, and indeed incessant wars between those neighboring nations and the Roman state during the early periods—continually renewed, in spite of repeated treaties, and many signal, and apparently decisive victories—are subjects of just surprise. M. Montesquieu has assigned a very ingenious cause for this dis-

regard of treaties. It was a maxim among the states of Italy, that treaties or conventions made with one king or chief magistrate had no binding obligation upon his successor. This, says he, was a sort of law of nations among them. It were to be wished that ingenious writer had given some special authority for this very singular fact, instead of contenting himself with saying in general that it appears throughout the history of the kings of Rome.

In the subsequent periods of the Roman history, hostilities more generally commenced upon the part of the Romans than on that of their neighbors; of which there seems to have been this simple cause, that the chief magistrates, the consuls, being changed every year, it was natural for every magistrate to endeavor to signalize himself as much as he could during the short period of his administration. Hence the consuls were always persuading the senate to some new military enterprise; and that body soon became glad of a pretext which, by employing the people in an occupation they were fond of, prevented all intestine disputes and animosities. That this continual engagement in war, and consequent characterised military spirit of the Romans, was owing to nothing else than their situation, is rendered the more probable from this fact, that, excepting a small circle of the states immediately around and in their vicinity, which necessarily contracted the same military spirit, all the other nations of Italy were indolent, voluptuous, and inactive.

The regal government among the Romans subsisted for 244 years, and during all that time only seven kings are said to have reigned. This statement is extraordinary; and the more so when we consider that there was no hereditary succession, where sometimes an infant succeeds to an old man; but each king was advanced in life when he ascended the throne; that several of them died a violent death, and that the last of them lived thirteen years after his expulsion. These are circumstances which have suggested considerable doubt with regard to this period of the Roman history; and it must be acknowledged that, even during the first five centuries from the alleged period of the building of Rome, we can be very little assured that the detail of facts which is commonly received on the authority of Livy and Dionysius is perfectly authentic. It is an undisputed fact, that during the greater part of that time there were no historians. The first Roman who undertook to write the history of his country, was Fabius Pictor, who lived during the second Punic war, (A. U. C. 535, and B. C. 218,) to which period he brought down his work; but the materials from which it was compiled were, if we may credit Dionysius, in a great measure traditionary reports; nor is his chronology to be relied on. We know, indeed, with some certainty, that there were no authentic monuments of the early ages at this time existing among the Romans. Livy tells us, that almost all the

ancient records of their history perished by fire when the city was taken by the Gauls. This author, therefore, with great candor, gives his readers to understand that he does not warrant the authenticity of what he relates of those ancient times. "It has been allowed," says he, "to antiquity to mix what is human or natural with the divine or supernatural, and thus to magnify or exalt the origin of empires; but on such traditions I lay little stress; and what weight or authority may be given to them I shall not here stop to consider." *

From such and similar considerations, some critics have gone so far as to reject as entirely fabulous the whole history of those first five hundred years of the Roman story: but this is to push the skeptical spirit greatly too far. There is, indeed, a mist of doubt hanging over the origin of this great people, as over that of most of the ancient nations: and it is the part of sober and discriminating judgment to separate what has the probability of authenticity from what is palpably fabulous, and thus to form for itself a rational creed, even with regard to those ages where the materials of history are most deficient. It is not unreasonable to conceive that the great outlines of the revolutions and fortune of nations, in remote periods of time, may be preserved for many centuries by tradition alone, though extremely natural that, in this traditionary record, the truth may undergo a liberal intermixture of fable and romance.

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## CHAPTER III.

Interregnum—Consuls appointed with sovereign power—Conspiracy against the new Government—Patriotism of Brutus—Valerian Law—War with Porsena—Popular disturbances—Debts of the Poor—A Dictator appointed—Impolitic conduct of the Patricians—Their Concessions—Tribunes of the People created—Change in the Constitution—Reflections on.

TARQUINIUS SUPERBUS had trampled on all the constitutional restraints, and on all the regulations of the preceding sovereigns. He had never assembled the senate, nor called together the people

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* Datur hæc venia antiquitati, ut miscendo humana divinis, primordia urbium augustiora faciat.—Sed hæc et his similia, utcunque animadversa aut æstimata erunt, haud equidem in magno ponam discrimine.—Liv. Hist., lib. i. Proem

in the *Comitia*. He is even said to have destroyed or broken the tablets on which the laws were written, in order to efface all remembrance of them. It was necessary, therefore, after his expulsion, that new tablets should be framed, and these, we may presume, were much the same with the former.

An interregnum took place for some time, and during this time the supreme power was lodged by the senate in the hands of Lucretius. Brutus having in his possession some writings of Servius Tullius, containing, as it is said, the plan of a republican government, these were read to the senate and people, and approved of. The regal government had become completely odious, and it was agreed to commit the supreme authority to two magistrates, to be annually elected by the people out of the order of the patricians. To these they gave the name of *Consules;* a modest title, says the Abbé de Vertot, which gave to understand that these magistrates were rather the counsellors of the republic than its sovereigns, and that the only point which they ought to have in view was its preservation and glory. But, in fact, the authority of the consuls differed scarcely any thing from that of the kings. They had the chief administration of justice, the absolute disposal of the public money, the power of convoking the senate, and assembling the people, of raising troops, naming all the officers, and the right of making peace, war, and alliance; in short, unless that their authority was limited to a year, they were in every respect kings. The consuls wore the purple robe, they had the *sella curulis*, or ivory chair of state, and each of them was attended by twelve lictors armed with the fasces, the symbols of their power of life and death. The two first consuls were Brutus and Collatinus, the husband of Lucretia.

These magistrates, we have said, were elected out of the body of the patricians; an exclusive privilege which, in fact, rendered the constitution purely aristocratical. But the jealousy of the people was not yet alarmed; and they were so well pleased to be freed from the despotic power of a single tyrant, that it did not occur to them that they had any thing to dread from a multitude of tyrants.

On this change of the government, solemn sacrifices were performed, the city was purified by an expiation or lustrum, and the people renewed their oath against the name and office of king. Tarquin was at this time in Etruria, where he prevailed on two of the most powerful cities, Veii and Tarquinii, to espouse his cause. These states sent ambassadors to Rome with a formal requisition, that the exiled prince might be allowed to return and give an account of his conduct; but as it must have been foreseen that such a proposal could meet with no regard, the true purpose of the embassy was to secure a party in the interest of Tarquin, who might cooperate in a meditated attempt to restore him to power; and this purpose they gained by a liberal employment of bribes

and promises. The conspiracy, however, was detected; and it was found that among the chief persons concerned were the two sons of Brutus, and the nephews of Collatinus. An example was now exhibited, severely extreme indeed, but which the necessity of circumstances required and justified. Brutus himself sat in judgment upon his two sons, and condemned them to be beheaded, himself witnessing their execution. *Exult patres et consulem agent, ut supra vivere, quam publica vindicta deesse malunt.** Such is the reflection of Valerius Maximus, but that of Livy is more natural; he remarks that Brutus, resolute as he was in the performance of this severe duty, could not lay aside the character, nor suppress the feelings of a father. *Quum inter omne tempus pater, cultusque et os ejus spectacula esset, eminente animo patrio, inter publicæ pœnæ ministeria.*† Collatinus had not strength to imitate that example, and his endeavor to avert the punishment of his nephews procured his own deposition and banishment.

War was now the last resource of Tarquin; and, at the head of the armies of Veii and Tarquinii, he marched against the Romans. He was met by the consuls Brutus and Publius Valerius, who, on the expulsion of Collatinus, had been chosen in his room, and an engagement ensued, in which Brutus lost his life. The fate of the battle was doubtful; but the Romans claimed the victory, and Valerius was honored with a triumph, a ceremony henceforward usually conferred on a victorious general after a decisive engagement. A higher honor was paid to the memory of Brutus, for whom the whole city wore mourning for ten months.

So much was the ardor of liberty kept alive by the attempts of the exiled prince, and such the jealousy of the Romans, roused by the slightest indications of an ambitious spirit in any of the citizens, that Valerius, notwithstanding the high favor he enjoyed on account of his public services, had, from a few circumstances apparently of the most trifling nature, almost lost his whole popularity. He had neglected, for some time, to summon the *comitia* for the election of a new consul, and he had built a splendid dwelling for himself on the summit of the Palatine hill, which commanded a prospect of the whole city—strong symptoms, it was thought, of the most dangerous ambition. Whether, in reality, he entertained such designs as were attributed to him, may well be doubted; but it is generally believed that a hint of his danger made him at once so zealous a patriot, and so strenuous a champion for the rights of the people, that he thence acquired the ambiguous surname of *Poplicola*. He pulled down his aspiring palace, and

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* "He sacrificed the feelings of a father to the obligations of chief magistrate, and preferred a childless old age to any failure of his duty to the state."

† "While all the time his looks betrayed the feelings of a father, the pure patriotism of his soul prevailed in the administration of public justice."

contented himself with a low mansion in an obscure quarter of the city. Whenever he appeared in public he ordered the consular *fasces* to be lowered before the people, and the axes to be laid aside, which henceforth were borne by the lictors only without the walls of the city. He caused a law to be passed, which made it death for any citizen to aim at being king; he refused to take custody of the money levied for the expenses of war, and caused that charge to be conferred on two of the senators. But of all sacrifices to liberty, that which in fact most materially enlarged the power of the people was a new law, which permitted any citizen who had been condemned to death by a magistrate, or even to banishment, to appeal to the people; the sentence being suspended till their decision was given. This law, which, from the name of its author was termed *Valerian*, struck most severely against the aristocracy; and from this era we may date the commencement of the democratic constitution of the Roman government. (A. U. C. 244.—B. C. 510.)

For thirteen years after the expulsion of Tarquinius Superbus, the Romans were involved in continual wars upon his account. Of these the most remarkable was the war with Porsena, king of Etruria, who had taken arms in behalf of the exiled prince. The detail of this war by the Roman writers would be extremely uninteresting, were it not embellished by some romantic stories which have much the air of fable. Such are the defence of a bridge by *Horatius Cocles*, single, against the whole Etrurian army; the attempt to assassinate Porsena by *Mutius Scævola*, and the proof he gave of his fortitude by holding his hand in the fire till it was consumed; the story of Clelia the hostage, and her companions, who swam across the Tiber amidst a shower of arrows;—beautiful incidents, but scarcely entitled to the credit of historical facts. Such examples, however, of invincible resolution are said to have produced a striking effect on the mind of Porsena, and to have converted him from an enemy into a firm friend and ally of the Romans. Tarquin, nevertheless, found still a powerful support from the external enemies, and doubtless from some of the traitorous subjects of the republic. Thirty of the states of Latium continued still in his interest, and the war was carried on with as much animosity as ever.

The Romans were in a train of success when there arose among them such violent dissensions as had very near caused the most fatal consequences. As these domestic disturbances continued long to embroil the republic, and were the source of many important revolutions, it is proper to consider their origin with some attention.

We have already seen that in the time of Romulus, when the first partition was made of the lands, a certain proportion was reserved for the public uses, and the rest distributed among the people by equal shares of two acres to each Roman citizen. After-

wards, when Rome was extending her territory, new partitions were made of the conquered lands, but not with the same impartiality and equality. A part was reserved for the use of the state, but the patricians generally contrived to get the rest into their hands, allowing no share to the inferior ranks of the people. These abuses became more frequent from the time of Servius's new arrangement, which gave the richer citizens an entire ascendency in the state, and they increased still more from the time of the expulsion of the kings, when the government became, as we have seen, aristocratical. The inequality of property continually increasing, and the influence of the lower classes clinging them frequently to contract debts, they found, in a little time, that they were stripped by the severity of their creditors even of those inconsiderable pittances of land from which they derived their subsistence. It was one of the early laws of the Roman state, that a debtor who was unable to pay was delivered as a slave to his creditor; he was chained that he might not escape, and was employed in the hardest labor. The grievance was further increased by the flagrant injustice that there was no law which limited the rate of interest on borrowed money, so that many of those miserable plebeians, incurring at first a trifling debt, saw themselves stripped of all they possessed, and reduced to a state of the most intolerable servitude.

From complaints which they found entirely disregarded, they proceeded to murmurs, and to open and violent expressions of their indignation against the higher orders. The war required new levies, and the senate ordered that the plebeians should enroll and arm in defence of the common liberties. These peremptorily refused the summons, declaring that they knew no liberties to defend, since a foreign yoke could not be more intolerable than the bondage they experienced at home.

The senate was assembled, and the matter solemnly deliberated. Some of the higher order generously gave their opinion for an entire remission of the debts of the poorer class of people; others opposed the proposal, as sanctioning a violation of faith, and a criminal breach of legal obligation. Appius Claudius, a violent and proud patrician, maintained that the people suffered nothing more than their deserts, and that if not kept in poverty they would be for ever factious and unruly. Amidst these contending opinions, the senate was at a loss what decision to pronounce. An alarm spread of the approach of the enemy to attack the city, and this report gave fresh spirit to the populace. They persisted in their refusal to enter the rolls, and declared that if their grievances were not immediately redressed, they would quit the city. The consuls found their authority of no avail, for the Valerian law had given every citizen whom they condemned, a right of appealing to the people.

To evade the force of this law, some extraordinary measure was

necessary. The senate passed a decree ordaining the consuls to lay down their office, and enacting that in their room a single magistrate should be elected by the senate, and confirmed by the people, who for six months should be invested with absolute and unlimited authority. The people were assembled in the *comitia* by centuries, an arrangement which, as we have seen, threw the whole power into the hands of the higher orders, and thus a decree was easily obtained which ratified the ordinance of the senate; the lower ranks, perhaps, flattering themselves that the new magistrate would procure a redress of their grievances. This is the first instance of the creation of a *dictator*, an expedient which we shall see was afterwards in times of necessity very frequently resorted to. The senate appointed one of the consuls, *Clelius*, to choose the dictator, (a form henceforth always observed,) and he named to that office his colleague *Lartius*. The dictator chose for himself a lieutenant, or *magister equitum*; he made the twenty-four lictors resume their axes, a sight which struck terror into the people, and disposed them to submission and obedience. All the citizens, whose names were called by the dictator, were enrolled without a murmur. Four bodies of troops were formed, of which one was left for defence of the city, and with the other three the dictator took the field against the enemy. He had some successes against the hostile states, which paved the way for a truce for a year, and, in the meantime, Lartius returned to Rome and abdicated his office. In the year following, when the war was renewed, it was found necessary to recur to the same expedient. Aulus Posthumius was chosen dictator, who gained an important victory near to the lake Regillus, in which the two sons of Tarquin, Sextus and Titus, were slain. This put an end to all his prospects. He retired to *Cuma* in Campania, where he died at the advanced age of ninety; and the allied states now concluded peace with the Romans (A. U. C. 257.) In this year was held the sixth *census*, or numeration of the Roman people, by which it appeared that the number of the citizens capable of bearing arms was 157,700.

Till now, the senators had seen the necessity of keeping some measures with the people, lest they should exasperate them into the execution of a design they sometimes expressed of calling back the exiled Tarquins. As this fear was now at an end, the insolence of the higher orders daily increased. Appius Claudius, who was at this time consul, now openly avowed a resolution of breaking this mutinous spirit of the plebeians, and reducing them to absolute submission. But this policy was no less absurd than it was tyrannical. The plebeians, from their vast superiority in numbers, had only to follow a united plan, to force the higher orders to compliance with any measure on which they chose to insist. A striking incident, which had a powerful effect on their passions, gave them this spirit of union, and excited the most violent ferment in the commonwealth.

In the midst of the public assembly, a venerable figure, hoary with age, pale and emaciated, his countenance furrowed with anguish, and his whole appearance expressive of misery and calamity, stood up before the tribunal of the consuls, and prayed aloud for mercy against the oppression of an inhuman creditor. Disfigured as he was, his countenance was known, and many remembered to have seen him in the wars, where he fought with great courage, and had received many honorable wounds in the service of his country. He told his story with affecting simplicity. The enemy, in an incursion, had ravaged his little farm, and set fire to his cottage. Bereft of subsistence, he had borrowed, to support life, a small sum from one of the rich citizens; the interest had accumulated, and being quite unable to discharge the debt, he had delivered himself with two of his children into bondage. In this situation he affirmed that his merciless creditor had treated him as the worst of malefactors; and throwing aside his garment, he showed his back all covered with blood from the recent strokes of the whip.*

This miserable sight roused the populace to the highest pitch of fury. They rushed upon the consul's tribunal; and Appius would have been torn to pieces, had not the lictors cleared for him a passage and carried him off to a place of safety. His colleague, Servilius, a man of a moderate and humane spirit, endeavored with tears in his eyes to appease the tumult, and pledged himself to the people to mediate with the senate in their behalf. Such was the state of Rome, when an alarm was given that the Volsci had entered the territory of the republic. The senate felt its weakness; they employed Servilius to treat with the people, and he gave them his promise that their grievances should be considered, and redressed as soon as the present danger was removed. They enlisted themselves under his standard, and marching against the Volsci, engaged and defeated them with considerable slaughter.

It had hitherto been customary, after every victory, where there was an acquisition of booty, to reserve a part of it for the use of the state; but Servilius, on this occasion, had thought it a wise policy to conciliate the troops by dividing the whole of it among them. Appius, with much indiscretion, thought proper to accuse him on that score to the senate, and to procure a vote of that body refusing him the honor of a triumph. Servilius felt the indignity, and in an assembly of the people in the Campus Martius, he complained to them of the senate's injustice. The people immediately brought forth the triumphal car, and placing him on it with high acclamations, conducted him to the capitol with the usual pomp of a triumph. But this strong testimony of popularity did not ensure the continuance of their favor. As Servilius had now

* See Livy, lib. ii. c. 23, where this incident is most eloquently related.

lost all credit with the senate by holding their authority in defiance, and hence found himself unable to make good his promise to the people of a redress of grievances, he soon became equally obnoxious to both parties.

The disorders, meantime, continued as violent as ever, and a new alarm from the enemy obliged the senate again to resort to the nomination of a dictator. Marcus Valerius, the brother of Poplicola, a man agreeable to the plebeians, was chosen to that high office; and as his private sentiments were favorable to their cause, he had no scruple to engage his word for a redress of their wrongs, on condition of their following his standard.

The enemy was subdued, and he now required the senate to fulfil his engagements. But Appius, the stubborn opponent of every measure that was favorable to the people, prevailed to have this demand refused. There is, I think, some question whether the dictator, in virtue of that supreme power with which he was for the time invested, could not by his own authority have enforced this measure, for which his honor was engaged. But Valerius was an old man, and probably dreaded the consequences of so violent a procedure. He assembled the people, and, after doing justice to their bravery and patriotism, he complained that he was not allowed to keep his engagements with them, but declared that his authority should no longer countenance a breach of the public faith, and he immediately abdicated his office.

The people, thus repeatedly and shamefully deceived, were determined to be no longer the dupes of promises. The senate, apprehensive of their spirit, had ordered the consuls not to disband them, but to lead them without the walls, on pretence that the enemy were still in the field. The soldiers, at the time of their enrolment, took an oath not to divest their standards till they were formally disbanded; but this oath they eluded by taking their standards along with them. Under Sicinius Bellutus, one of their own order, they marched with great regularity to a hill at three miles distance from the city, afterwards called, from that occurrence, the *Mons Sacer*; and here they were in a short time joined by the greatest part of the people.*

There can be nothing figured more arbitrary and more impolitic than the proceedings of the senate. Their pride was now humbled; they found there was a necessity for adopting the most lenient and conciliatory measures; and they deputed some of the most respectable of their order, who, after a difficult and labored negotiation, were compelled at length to grant the people all they demanded. The debts were solemnly abolished; and for the security of the people in time to come, and a warrant against all new attempts or modes of oppression, they were allowed the right

* Dion. Hal., lib. v.; Livy, lib. ii., c. 32.

of choosing magistrates from their own order, who should have the power of opposing with effect every measure which they might judge in any shape prejudicial to their interest.

These new magistrates were to be elected annually, like the consuls. They were five in number,* and were termed *tribunes*, because the first of them were chosen from among the *tribuni militum* of the different legions. They had the power of suspending, by a single *veto*, the execution of any decree of the senate which they judged prejudicial to the interest of the people; they were not allowed, however, to interfere in the deliberations of that body, nor permitted even to enter the senate-house. The persons of these magistrates were declared sacred; but their authority was confined within the bounds of the city and a mile beyond the walls. The tribunes demanded two magistrates to aid them in their office, and this request was likewise granted. These were called *Ædiles*, from the charge given them of the public buildings; and afterwards they had likewise the care of the games, spectacles, and other matters of police within the city.

The creation of the Tribunes of the People is the era of a change in the Roman constitution. The Valerian law had given a severe blow to the aristocracy, or party of the patricians; and the creation of popular magistrates with such high powers had now plainly converted the government into a democracy. Had the people been mildly dealt with, the desire of a revolution had never taken place, and the patricians might have enjoyed their ascendency in the state, to which time would always have given new confirmation. But the violence and unruly passions of a few leading men are capable of embroiling the most peaceful community, and awakening causes of discontent and jealousy which otherwise would have had no existence. The tyrannizing spirit of Appius Claudius, and the stubbornness of that faction of the rich who supported him, drove the people at length to desperate measures, and gave rise to that formidable and resistless opposition of which we have seen the effects.

A strong degree of jealousy had, from the first institution of the commonwealth, begun to rankle in the breasts of the plebeians against the higher order. They saw, with a very natural indignation, that the patricians had supplanted them in all the offices of power and emolument; for, though there was a nominally free election to those offices in which the whole people had a right of suffrage, yet this, from causes already sufficiently explained, was in practice illusory. But the immediate cause of things coming to an open rupture was, as we have seen, the intolerable burden of the debts owing by the poor to the rich. This grievance

* About thirty years after, their number was increased to *ten*, and it so continued ever afterwards.

became at length so general, from the frequency of the military campaigns, in which every soldier was obliged to serve at his own charges, and from the ravages committed on the lands by the hostile armies, which reduced the poorer sort entirely to beggary, that the plebeians began to look upon their order as born to a state of hereditary servitude. Hence that desperate measure of abandoning the city and encamping in arms upon the *Mons Sacer*. All that the people at this time desired was not power, but a relief from oppression and cruelty. And had this just claim been readily listened to, and a relief granted to them, if not by an entire abolition of the debts, at least by repressing the enormious usury, and taking away the inhuman rights of slavery and of corporal punishment, this people would, in all probability, have cheerfully returned to order and submission, and the Roman constitution might long have remained, what we have seen it was at first, aristocratical. But a torrent imprudently resisted will in time acquire that impetuous force which carries every thing before it. The patricians, sensible that they had pushed matters to a most alarming extreme, and now thoroughly intimidated, were obliged to grant the demand of creating popular magistrates. The tribunate being once established, we shall see it become the main object with those magistrates to increase their own powers by continual demands and bold encroachments. The people, regarding them as the champions of their rights, are delighted to find themselves gradually approaching to an equality with the higher order; and no longer bounding their desires to ease and security, become soon equally influenced by ambition as their superiors, while that passion in them is the less subject to control that they have more to gain and less to lose. While this people, borne down by hardships and oppression, seek no more than the redress of real grievances and a share of ease and happiness as the members of a free state, we applaud their spirited exertions, and execrate that arbitrary and inhuman principle which prompted the higher order to treat them as slaves or inferior beings. But when we behold this people compassing at length by a vigorous and manly resistance the end they wished for—attaining ease and security, nay power, which at first they had not sought, and never dreamed of; when we see them, after this, increasing in their demands, assuming all that arrogance they justly blamed before, goaded on by the ambition of their leaders to aim at tyrannizing in their turn — we view with proper discrimination the love of liberty and its extreme, licentiousness; and treat with just detestation the authors of those pernicious measures, which embroiled the state in endless factions, and paved the way for a total loss of that liberty which this deluded people knew not to put a true value upon when they actually possessed it.

Some authors, and among the rest the Abbé Condillac, pretend to find in those perpetual dissensions and violent struggles between

the patrician and plebeian orders at Rome, the true cause of the glorious and prodigious extension of her empire, and of all her subsequent grandeur and prosperity. This, though not an uncommon mode of reasoning, is by far more specious than it is solid. I would ask what shadow of necessary connection there is between the factious disorders, and internal convulsions of a state, and the extension of her empire by foreign conquest? On the contrary, it seems a self-evident proposition, that while the one spirit exists, the other for the time is extinguished, or lies altogether dormant: for the ambition of domestic rule cannot otherwise be gratified than by a constant and servile attention to the arts of popularity, incompatible with the generous passion which leads to national aggrandizement. The people too, won only by corruption, and split by rival demagogues into factions, inhibited against each other with the most rancorous hostilities, are incapable of that cordial union to which every foreign enterprise must owe its success. The martial spirit may, no doubt, be kept alive, and find improving exercise in a civil war or rebellion; but this spirit finds too much exercise at home, to seek for employment in foreign conquests: and in the breasts of the leading men, those selfish motives, either of avarice or the love of power, which are commonly the sources of all civil disorders, are baneful to every generous and patriotic feeling, which seeks alone the true greatness or glory of the state.

In the present case, the true causes of the wonderful extension of the Roman empire will be sought in vain, in the perpetual contests between the higher and the lower orders. These, instead of being productive of national aggrandizement, were the immediate causes of the fall of the commonwealth and the ruin of civil liberty. The main source of the extension of the empire by its conquests, is to be found in the extraordinary abilities of a few great men, who, either in a subordinate station had too much worth to prefer a selfish interest to the glory of their country, or who, spurning the more confined object of superior power at home, proposed to themselves a nobler and more glorious aim by extending the limits of that empire which they ruled as sovereigns.

It is not to be denied that other causes, likewise, contributed to the aggrandizement of the Roman empire. Several of these have been pointed out by Montesquieu. Such was, among others, the very power of those enemies they had to encounter; a power which must either have entirely oppressed and annihilated them, or forced them to that most vigorous and animated exertion to which they owed their successes. Such enemies were the Gauls, the Macedonians under Pyrrhus, and the Carthaginians under Hannibal. So far were the factions of the state from being the cause of those successes, and that rapid extension of empire, that it was the formidable power of such external enemies that, lulling

asleep for the time every source of domestic faction and disorder, enabled the republic to employ its whole strength, and make those spirited efforts to which it owed its most glorious successes.

## CHAPTER IV.

Increase of the power of the Tribunes—They convoke an assembly of the People—Coriolanus—Disputes on the Agrarian Law—Law of Volero—and change produced by it.

The disorders which we have seen allayed by the creation of the tribunes of the people, were only quieted for a very short space of time. We shall see them immediately renewed, and continued, with very little interruption, till the people acquired an equal title with the patricians to all the offices and dignities of the commonwealth. Thus, for a period of almost two centuries, the history of Rome, during every succeeding year, presents almost the same scenes: an endless reiteration of complaints, on account of the same or similar grievances: opposed by the same spirit, resisted by similar arguments, and usually terminating in the same way, to the increase of the popular power. As our object is to give rather a just idea of the character and spirit of nations, than a scrupulous detail, or minute chronicle of events, we shall, in that period, touch only on such circumstances as, while they are illustrative of the genius of the people, are necessary to form a connected chain of the principal events which had their influence on the revolutions and fate of this Republic.

The first tribunes of the people were created 260 years after the foundation of Rome, and seventeen years after the abolition of the regal government. These magistrates were habited like simple citizens; they had no exterior ensigns of power; they had neither tribunal nor jurisdiction as judges; they had no guards nor attendants, unless a single domestic termed *Viator* or *Apparitor*. They stood without the senate-house, nor durst they enter it unless they were called in by the consuls: but possessing, as we have said, the power of suspending or annulling, by a single veto, the most solemn decrees of that body, their influence and authority were very great.

Every thing, for a little while, wore an appearance of tranquillity. The senators blindly applauded themselves on the success of their negotiation, as they saw the people pleased, and could see

nothing to fear from those rude and simple magistrates, who had not even the outward symbols of power But this delusion was of short continuance.

It was in the beginning of spring, that the people had retreated to the *Mons Sacer*; at a time when it was customary to plough and sow the fields of the republic. As the lands had lain neglected during those commotions, it was not surprising that the following harvest should be a season of great scarcity. This, perhaps, the senate, by proper precautions, might have prevented. The tribunes accused that body of negligence, and of a design to raise a famine among the people, while the patricians, as they insinuated, had taken care of themselves, by laying in abundant supplies.

The consuls assembled the people, and attempted to justify the senate; but being constantly interrupted by the tribunes, they could not make themselves be heard. They urged, that the tribunes having only the liberty of opposing, ought to be silent till a resolution was formed. The tribunes, on the other hand, contended that they had the same privileges in an assembly of the people that the consuls had in a meeting of the senate. The dispute was running high, when one of the consuls rashly said, that if the tribunes had convoked the assembly, they, instead of interrupting them, would not even have taken the trouble of coming there; but that the consuls having called this assembly, they ought not to be interrupted. This imprudent speech was an acknowledgment of a power in the tribunes to convoke the public assemblies; a power which they themselves had never dreamt of. It may be believed they were not remiss in laying hold of the concession. They took the whole people to witness what had been said by the consuls, and an assembly of the people was summoned, by the tribunes, to meet the next day.*

The whole people assembled by daybreak. Icilius, one of the tribunes, urged that, in order that they might be in a capacity of effectually fulfilling their duty, in protecting and vindicating the rights of the people, they should have the power, not only of calling them together, but of haranguing them without being subject to any interruption. The people were unanimously of this opinion; and a law to that purpose was instantly passed by general acclamation. The consuls would have rejected this law, on the score of the assembly's being held against all the established forms:—it had not been legally summoned, and there had been no consultation of the auspices; but the tribunes declared that they would pay no more regard to the decrees of the senate, than the consuls and the senate should pay to those of the people. The senate was forced to yield, and the new law was ratified by the consent

* Dion. Hal. l. c. Liv. lib. ii. Plutarch in Coriol.

of both orders. Thus there were now established in the republic two separate legislative powers, which maintained a constant opposition to each other.

There was but one method by which the senate might, perhaps, have recovered their power. This was, by exercising their authority with such moderation, and so much regard to the interests of the people, as to render the functions of the tribunes superfluous. But this was a difficult part to act. Being once supreme, they could not stoop to an abasement of power, and inflexibly struggling to maintain a prerogative which they wanted real strength to vindicate, they prepared for themselves only a greater humiliation.

One of the most violent of the senators was Caius Marcius, surnamed Coriolanus, from a successful campaign he had made against the Volsci, in which he had taken Corioli, one of their principal towns. Coriolanus had aspired to the consulate, but the people, fearing his high and arrogant spirit, had excluded him from that dignity. Incensed at this disappointment, he took every opportunity of expressing his resentment, and in particular, declared openly in the senate, that the necessities of the people, occasioned by the present famine, furnished an opportunity which ought not to be neglected, of compelling them to relinquish all pretensions to authority, and to abolish their new magistrates.

The people, exasperated beyond measure, vowed vengeance against Coriolanus, and they summoned him to appear before them, and answer for his conduct. He refused, and the Ædiles had orders to arrest him, but were repulsed in the attempt by his partisans among the patricians. In a tumultuous assembly of the people, one of the tribunes proceeded, with a daring stretch of authority, to pronounce Coriolanus guilty of treason, and award a capital punishment: but the people themselves were sensible that this was going too far: they remitted this precipitate sentence; allowed him twenty-seven days to prepare his defence, and summoned him to appear before their assembly after the lapse of that term.

During this interval the consuls and the chief senators, who saw the dangerous consequences of violent measures, endeavored, by persuasion, to promote a good understanding between the orders. They labored to convince the tribunes that it had hitherto been the constant practice, and agreeable to the constitution of the republic, that every public measure should originate by a motion in the senate, and that till this body had given a decree, no business of state could be agitated in the assembly of the people. The tribunes did not acquiesce in these propositions: they contended that the authority of the people was coordinate with that of the senate; and that—the Valerian law having ordained a right of appeal to the people from the senate, and all magistrates—they must, of course, possess the right of citing before them any citizens

who had offended. The affair was of difficult decision, in the uncomplying temper in which parties then stood. It was, however, thus compromised for the present. The tribunes agreed to make their complaint against Coriolanus in the senate, and that body consented, on their part, to refer the consideration of the cause back to the assembly of the people. This course, accordingly, was adopted. The senate admitted the importance (if proved) of the charges preferred to their body by the tribunes, and ordained Coriolanus to appear and answer in the assembly of the people. They were desirous, however, of procuring this assembly to be convoked *by centuries*; by which means they flattered themselves with an entire ascendant, which would ensure the acquittal of their member: but the people would not consent to it; the votes were called in the order of *the tribes*; and Coriolanus was condemned to perpetual exile.

He now proposed to himself a plan of vengeance, in the last degree ignominious, and which no injuries an individual can receive are sufficient to justify. He repaired to the camp of the Volscians, and offered his services to the determined enemies of his country. They were accepted; and such was the consequence of his abilities as a general, that Rome, in the space of a few months, was reduced to extremity. The people now demanded that the senate should repeal their decree of banishment; but that body, with a laudable firmness, declared that they would grant no terms to a rebel while in arms against his sovereign state. The importunity of the populace, however, so far prevailed, that a deputation, consisting of five persons of consular dignity, and his own relations, was sent to propose terms of accommodation. Coriolanus haughtily answered, that he would never consent to treat of peace, till the Romans should restore whatever they possessed of the Volscian territory, and he allowed the space of thirty days to consider of this proposition. At the end of that time he appeared again with his army under the walls of the city. The senate maintained an inflexible resistance to the demands of the traitor, and to the popular clamor. At length a band of Roman matrons, at the head of which was Veturia, the mother of Coriolanus, with his wife and children, repaired to the camp of the enemy, and suddenly presented themselves at the feet of Coriolanus. The severity of his nature was not proof against this last appeal. He consented to lay down his arms; he ordered his troops to retire; and thus Rome owed her safety to the tears of a woman.

There are few historical *events* (so called) which give more room for skepticism than this story of Coriolanus. If we should admit that the resentment of his wrongs might have hurried a high-spirited Roman into a conduct so utterly disgraceful—and moreover so dangerous, while his mother, his wife, and all his kindred were hostages in the hands of his countrymen,—how can we believe that Rome, ever superior as we have seen her to the

petty states which were her enemies, should, during the whole time of this lengthened negotiation, have taken no effective measures of resistance or defence; that we should neither find a Roman general nor a Roman army in the field to check the triumphant pride of this traitor to his country; that the Volscians—who, three years before, were so weakened by a pestilence, that Velitræ, one of their most flourishing towns, would have been entirely depopulated, but for the supply of a colony of Roman citizens—should have now become so powerful as to strike terror and dismay into the Roman state, and compel her to that mean act of supplication, to which, we are told, she owed her escape from destruction? If there is any truth in a story so void of probability, there is only one circumstance truly deserving of attention—the striking contrast between the conduct of the senate and that of the people. The people—fluctuating in their opinions, and ever in extremes—the one day, in the height of exasperation against Coriolanus for an offence against themselves, condemn him to perpetual exile; and the next, ignominiously entreat his forgiveness and deprecate his resentment. The senate—who, before his condemnation, alarmed at what they thought a stretch of power in the people, would have done every thing to save him, yet, sentence being once passed, conscious that the honor of the republic was her most valuable possession, which no danger ought to compel its guardians to betray—could by no entreaties be swayed to make concessions to a rebel in arms against his country. While such were the sentiments of her chief magistrates, Rome, weak and defenceless as we are told she was, continues still to command respect and admiration.

Historians are not agreed as to the fate of Coriolanus—a circumstance which renders the whole of his history more suspicious. According to some authors, he was assassinated by the Volscians, in revenge for his defection; according to others, he languished out his days among them in melancholy obscurity. It has never been asserted seriously that he returned to Rome.

The dissensions between the orders with which the Roman republic was destined to be for ever embroiled, were now rekindled from a new cause of controversy. This was an agrarian law, a measure proposed at first by Cassius, one of the consuls, from motives of selfish ambition. He aimed at nothing less than supreme power; and he proposed this measure of an equal partition of all the lands which had been at any time won from the enemy, as the most probable means of acquiring the favor of the people. But he was too precipitate; his views were suspected, and the tribunes gave the alarm. They could not bear that popular measures should be proposed by any but themselves; they adopted the scheme of Cassius; but persuaded the people that what was an interested measure upon his part, they were determined to prosecute for the public good.

The senate, jealous of the tribunes, and sufficiently aware of the views of Cassius, were resolved themselves to preoccupy the ground. They passed a decree that an inquiry should be made as to those conquered lands which had at any time been adjudged to belong to the public; that a part should be reserved for the common pasturage of cattle, and that the rest should be distributed to such of the plebeians as had either no lands, or but a small proportion. Yet this was all a piece of artifice on the part of the higher orders. They had no mind that this decree should ever be carried into effect. They subjoined to it a clause that the *consules designati*, or those who were next year to enter upon that office, should name *decemviri* for making the necessary investigation and following forth the decree.

This measure of an *agrarian law* we shall observe, from this time forward, to be a source of domestic dissensions, down to the very end of the commonwealth. Cassius was the first proposer of it, and it cost him his life. His office of consul was no sooner at an end, than he was solemnly accused of aspiring at royalty; and, by sentence of the popular assembly, he was thrown from the Tarpeian Rock, the usual punishment of treason. Soon afterwards, Mœnius, one of the tribunes, brought on the consideration of the law. He called on the consuls to nominate the *decemviri*; and on their refusal, he opposed the levies which the consuls had ordered to be made on account of a war with the Æqui and Volsci. The consuls adopted a very violent procedure: they quitted the city, and established their tribunal without the jurisdiction of the tribunes. Thither they summoned the people to attend them, and to give up their names to be enrolled. They refused to obey; on which the consuls ordered their lands to be ravaged, and their flocks carried off. This had its desired effect; but so violent a measure was never again attempted. A more sure and less dangerous expedient was afterwards followed, which was, to divide the tribunes. One tribune could, by his *veto*, oppose or suspend any decree; but if another opposed him, the *veto* was of no effect. Icilius, one of the tribunes, having opposed the forming of the levies, his four colleagues, gained over by the senate, took the opposite side; and it was therefore agreed that the consideration of the agrarian law should be postponed till the termination of the war.

When that period arrived, the contest was again renewed. The tribunes brought on the consideration of the law; they demanded why the last consuls had not named *decemviri;* and they even pretended to call them to account and to punish them for this omission. Genucius, a tribune, summoned the consuls of the current year to execute the decree which had been so long neglected. They refused, on pretence that a decree of the senate, when not executed by those consuls to whom it was directed, was held to be abrogated. Genucius then summoned the consuls

of the preceding year to answer for their conduct, and vowed, as is said, that he would prosecute them to his latest breath. They took care that he should keep his word, for the next day he was found dead in his bed. The people were made to regard this as a judgment of the gods, who thus expressed their disapprobation of the schemes of his factious tribune; and his colleagues were intimidated for some time from prosecuting his views; not less, perhaps, from the apprehension of human than of divine vengeance.

The consuls and senate, trusting to the effect of this example, assumed a more rigid authority, and the levies were made with severe exactness. Among those whom the consuls had enrolled as a common soldier, was a plebeian named *Volero*, who, in a former campaign, had been a centurion, and was esteemed a good officer. He complained of the injustice done him in thus degrading him, and refused to obey. The consuls ordered him to be scourged, from which sentence he appealed to the people. One of the consular lictors endeavoring to arrest him was beaten off; and the people, spontaneously taking his part, broke the *fasces* and drove the consuls out of the forum. The senate was immediately assembled, and the consuls demanded that Volero should be thrown from the Tarpeian Rock. The plebeians, on the other hand, called for justice against the consuls for a breach of the Valerian law, in disregarding Volero's appeal to the people; and the contest lasted till the election of the annual magistrates, when Volero was chosen one of the tribunes. The person of a tribune was sacred, and that of a consul, when out of office, was not so; but Volero did not choose to limit his vengeance to the two consuls; the whole senate was the object of his resentment, and he resolved to strike a blow which they should never recover.

The election of the tribunes of the people had hitherto been held in the *comitia curiata*. Volero urged that as these comitia could not be summoned but by a decree of the senate, that body might, on various pretences, postpone or refuse to summon them; that the previous ceremony of consulting the auspices was necessary, and these the priests, who were the augurs, could interpret in any manner they chose; and that, lastly, it was always held necessary that whatever was done in those assemblies should be confirmed by a decree of the senate. He represented all these formalities as being nothing else than restrictions imposed by the senate on the popular deliberations—and proposed that henceforth the magistrates of the people should be chosen in the comitia called by tribes, which were exempt from all those restraints.

The senate, by throwing difficulties in the way, found means to retard for some time the passing of a law so fatal to their power; but their opposition was in the main ineffectual; for it passed at last, and with this remarkable addition, that all questions, in which the affairs of *the people* were agitated, should henceforward be debated in the *comitia tributa*.

This famous law of Volero completed the change in the constitution of the Roman Republic. The supreme authority from this time may be considered as having passed from the higher orders into the hands of the people. The consuls continued to preside in the comitia held by centuries; but the tribunes presided in those assemblies in which the most important business of the commonwealth was now transacted. The senate retained, however, a considerable degree of power. They had the disposal of the public money; they sent and received ambassadors,—made treaties—and their decrees had the force of a law while not annulled by a decree of the people. In a word, this body continued to have respect, and at least the appearance of authority, which we shall observe to have yet its effect in frequently restraining the violence of the popular measures. The consuls too, though in most points of effective power and authority subordinate to the tribunes, had yet in some particulars a vestige of supremacy. They were absolute at the head of the army, and first in command in the civil authority within the city. Their office still carried with it that external show of dignity which commands respect and submission, and which, over the minds of the vulgar, is frequently attended with the same influence as substantial power.

## CHAPTER V.

An Agrarian Law never seriously projected — Decemviri proposed to digest a Code of Laws — Cincinnatus — Appointment of Decemvirs — Laws of the Twelve Tables — Tyranny of the Decemvirs — Infamous conduct of Appius Claudius—Death of Virginia—Abolition of the Decemvirate.

The People having now attained so very considerable an increase of authority, might certainly have prevailed in obtaining the favorite measure of an agrarian law. But the truth is, this measure was nothing more than a political engine, occasionally employed by the popular magistrates for exciting commotions, and weakening the power of the patricians. It was a measure attended necessarily with so much difficulty in the execution, that few even of the people themselves had a sincere desire of seeing it accomplished. The extensive disorder it must have introduced in the territorial possessions of the citizens, by a new distribution of all the lands acquired by conquest to the republic since the time of Romulus—

the affection which even the poorest feel for a small patrimonial inheritance, the place of their nativity, and the repository of the bones of their forefathers—and that most admirable and most salutary persuasion that it is an act of impiety to alter or remove ancient landmarks—* all these were such strong obstacles to the accomplishment of that design, that it could never be seriously expected that the measure would meet with that effectual support which was necessary to carry it into execution.

The tribunes, well aware of those difficulties, and fearing that from too frequent repetition the proposal would become at length so stale as to produce no useful effect, bethought themselves of a new topic to keep alive the spirits of the people, and to foment those dissensions which increased their own power and diminished that of the patricians.

The Romans had at this time no body of civil laws. Those few which they had, were only known to the senate and patricians, who interpreted them according to their pleasure, and as best suited their purposes. Under the regal government, the kings alone administered justice: the consuls succeeded to this part of the royal prerogative, so that they had, in fact, the disposal of the fortunes of all the citizens. Terentius, or Terentillus, one of the tribunes, in an assembly of the people, after a violent declamation on public grievances of all kinds, and particularly on that dreadful circumstance of the lot of the plebeians, that in all contests with patricians they were sure to suffer, as the latter were both judges and parties, proposed that, in order to remedy this great evil, ten commissioners, or *decemviri*, should be appointed to frame and digest a new body of laws, for defining and securing the rights of all the different orders,—a system of jurisprudence binding alike on consuls, senators, patricians, and plebeians.

This proposition, having essential justice and good policy for its foundation, was received by the people with loud applause. It had been prudent in the higher orders to have given it no opposition, as in reality no solid objection could be made to it. But there was always a party in the senate who made it a settled principle to oppose every thing which was either beneficial or grateful to the people; as in most factions, the conduct of the different partisans is influenced less by considerations either of political expediency or moral rectitude, than by an uniform purpose of abasing and mortifying their antagonists.

The proposal, therefore, met with opposition; and the conse-

* The ingenious fable related by Ovid, Fast. lib. ii. v. 667, is a proof of this prevalent belief. The purport is, that when the capitol was founded in honor of Jupiter, all the other gods consenting to retire and abandon their right in the place, the god *Terminus* alone refused and kept his post. The moral drawn is, that what Jupiter himself could not remove, should yield to no human will or power.

quence was, that the people, regardless of the previous formality of a decree of the senate, passed the law of Terentius in an assembly of the tribes. The senators protested against this as a most presumptuous and unconstitutional innovation. The law of Volero, it is true, which allowed all questions regarding the popular interest to be deliberated on in the *comitia tributa*, seemed in effect to confer on the assembly of the people so held, the right of legislation; but the exercise of such a right, immediately and originally in the people, had been hitherto without example. The patricians, too, might have urged with justice, that if they were not allowed to have the right of making laws to bind the plebeians without their consent, neither could the plebeians possess a similar right to bind the patricians. Influenced by such considerations, some young men of the patrician order, headed by Caeso Quinctius, the son of L. Quinctius Cincinnatus, burst in arms into the midst of the comitia, and beating down all before them, dispersed the assembly. For this offence Caeso was banished by a decree of the people.

These intestine disorders, which persuaded the enemies of Rome of her general weakness, induced the Sabines to form a design of surprising and taking possession of the city. A body of 4000 men entered Rome during the night, seized upon the capitol, and invited all such citizens as were oppressed by the tyranny of their superiors to join them and vindicate their freedom. A great proportion of the people actually deliberated on this proposal: so true it is that the factious of a state never fail to extinguish the patriotic spirit; thus developing the true spring of most popular convulsions, a selfish thirst of plunder to be gratified in the overthrow of all legal authority. The senate ordered the people to arms; and the tribunes countermanded that order, declaring that, unless the consuls should immediately agree to the nomination of commissioners for the laws, they were determined to submit without resistance to the dominion of the Sabines. Publius Valerius, one of the consuls, pledged himself to the people for the performance of this condition; and the people, now taking arms, attacked and cut to pieces the Sabine army. But Valerius unfortunately fell in the engagement, and his colleague, having come under no obligation, refused to comply with the popular desire. A successor was chosen to Valerius in the consulate, L. Quinctius Cincinnatus, a man of great resolution and intrepidity, who, though himself so indigent as to cultivate with his own hands his paternal fields, and to be called from the plough to put on the robe of the consul, had yet the high spirit of an ancient patrician, which was ill disposed to brook the insolence of the popular magistrates, or acquiesce in the daily increasing pretensions of the inferior order.

Cincinnatus took a new method to bring the people to submission. He declared to the soldiers—who were yet bound by their *sacramentum*, or oath of enrolment—that he intended to carry on

the war against the Æqui and Volsci, and that, for that purpose, they should winter under their tents; that he was determined not to return to Rome till the expiration of his consulate, at which time he would nominate [illegible], to secure the continuance of good order and tranquillity.

The people, who, in all their military expeditions, had never been above a few weeks at a time under arms, were thunderstruck when they heard of a winter campaign. The relinquishment of their families, and the neglect of their lands, which must necessarily be followed by a famine, were considerations most seriously alarming. They now inveighed bitterly against their tribunes who had brought matters to this extremity, and even made a proposal to the senate, agreeing to drop the Terentian law altogether, provided that body would permit the consul to depose [illegible] purpose. On that condition, Cincinnatus consented to postpone the war, and the consequence was, that during his consulate every thing was tranquil, and the equity of his administration made the want of laws be for a time entirely forgotten.

Two years afterwards, the republic owed her preservation to the same Cincinnatus. The Æqui had surrounded a consular army, and reduced it to extremity. Cincinnatus was chosen dictator: he [illegible] the enemy, and compelling them to lay down their arms, made their whole army pass naked under the yoke. In reward of this signal service he was honored with a triumph; his son Cæso was [illegible] from banishment, and he abdicated his dictatorship within seventeen days.

But this opposition to the strong will of the people produced only a temporary obstruction in the force of a stream whose current was irresistible. It was the care of the tribunes perpetually to present to the minds of the populace some new object to be attained; and they now proposed that such part of the *Aventine Mount* as remained unoccupied by individual proprietors should be distributed among the poorer citizens. The consuls having delayed to propose this matter in the senate, Icilius, one of the tribunes, sent his apparitor to summon the consuls to convoke that assembly for the purpose in view. The consuls might have contemned this presumptuous summons, and so made the tribune sink under the consequence of an abortive stretch of authority, which had no support in established right or usage; but they were imprudent enough to cause their lictors to strike the apparitor with his fasces. This was a violation of the sacred character and office of the tribunes. The lictor was arrested—the senate met to allay the disturbance. It was a small matter that the people obtained their request of the Aventine Mount; but the serious and deepfelt consequence of this affair was, that from that moment the tribunes—they who were wont to sit at the door of the senate-house till called in by the consuls—now claimed and acquired a right of convoking that assembly at their pleasure.

The tribunes had this advantage over all the other magistrates, that they could be continued in office as long as the people chose. Icilius had now been re-elected for six successive years; when, emboldened by repeated experiments of his power, he attempted to subject the consuls to the tribunal of the people. A tumult having arisen on account of the levies, Icilius ordered the consuls to be carried to prison, for having seized some of the plebeians whom he wished to protect from enrolment. The patricians flew among the crowd, and drove back the tribunes and their attendants. Icilius hereupon accused the consuls of having committed sacrilege against the tribunes, and insisted that the senate should oblige them to appear before the people in the *Comitia*, and submit to whatever penalty the latter should deem proper to inflict. This bold enterprise might have succeeded, had it been possible to keep alive the same ardor with which the people seemed at first to be animated; but reflection having time to operate, the people still felt a degree of reverence for the first magistrates of the state, which made them look upon this as a species of rebellion. Icilius very soon perceived this change in their disposition, and was prudent enough to make a merit of sacrificing his resentment to the public tranquility. To support his power, which might have suffered from the defeat of this bold attempt, he resumed the subject of the Terentian law, and insisted for an immediate nomination of decemvirs. After some fruitless essays of opposition by the patricians, which, as usual, ended to their disadvantage, the senate was at length forced to acquiesce in the measure. Deputies are said to have been sent into Greece to obtain accurate information as to the constitutions of the several republics, and particularly to form a collection of the laws of Solon. These, it is said, returned after a year's absence; and it was then agreed to create *decemviri*, to frame and digest such ordinances as they should judge most proper for the Roman commonwealth.* It was thought necessary that these magistrates should, for one year, be invested with sovereign power; during which time, all other magistracies, even the tribunate, which used to subsist during the dictatorship, should cease; and that they alone should have the power of making peace and war. They were to be restrained only in one article—that they should not abolish the *sacred laws;* that is, those which had been made in favor of the plebeians.

Menenius, the consul, in order to create some obstacle to the conclusion of this important measure, proposed that the decemvirs should be named by the consuls of the succeeding year, and this

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* The testimonies for this embassy into Greece are Livy and Dionysius of Halicarnassus; but the silence of all the Greek writers with regard to this remarkable deputation creates a suspicion of the fact being void of foundation; nor is there any such resemblance between the laws of Solon and those of the XII Tables as to countenance this popular story.

being agreed to, the patricians took care that the consuls should be such as were believed to have no favorable disposition towards the popular cause. Appius Claudius and Titus Genucius, were elected consuls. But Appius disappointed the expectations of his party; for, instead of opposing the creation of decemvirs, he solicited that office. He offered, for himself and his colleague, to renounce the consulship, and proposed, in order to remove all grievances, that the same law should be enacted for patricians and plebeians. The people now applauded Appius to the skies. The comitia were called by centuries, a circumstance which confined the office to the order of the patricians. Appius Claudius and his colleague were first nominated, and the remaining eight were, like them, senators and consular persons. The people expected a great deal from the professions of Appius; and the senate was pleased in the hope that his colleague would find a strong restraint from the opposition of his colleagues.

Thus, the earnest desire of the people was, at length, gratified by the creation of the *decemviri*. But ever impatient of their present situation, and prone to imagine advantages in every change, the populace seldom looks forward to the natural consequences of the innovations which they long for. We shall see how soon they began to reap the bitter fruits of obtaining their desire. It is somewhat difficult to account for the active part taken by the tribunes in the creation of this new magistracy; a dignity and power which was to supersede and extinguish their own. It is not improbable, that the part which they took in this matter proceeded from no other motive than the general policy of fomenting animosities between the orders, which they found most frequently gave occasion to an extension of their own power and influence; that they never seriously expected to obtain their demand; and were, indeed, mortified at their own success. But what is most surprising is the cordial concurrence latterly shown, by both the orders, in vesting those new magistrates with such plenitude of power, as furnished them with the means they actually made use of, to annihilate all authority but their own, and render their office perpetual.

The *decemvirs*, in the first year of their magistracy, labored with much assiduity in the compilation of the laws. And when their work was completed, they divided these, at first into *ten*, and afterwards into *twelve* tables. Of these Laws of the Twelve Tables, of which the name is illustrious, it is necessary to give some account, and of the sources from which it is probable they were compiled.

During the time of the regal government at Rome, we know very little of what was the state of the laws. In all probability, these were nothing else than a few regulations, called forth by the exigence of circumstances, and suggested by the particular cases which came before the judicial tribunals. A large mass of

rules might thus be accumulated: but these, being framed on no general principles, would often, in their application to new cases, be found to err against natural justice. No application of reason or philosophy had ever been made to the discovery of legal principles; for every rule was only the decision of an individual judge, according to what appeared just and equitable in the case before him. It has been a question agitated between the partisans of the popular cause and the advocates for the extension of the powers of monarchy, whether the kings of Rome were absolute, both in their legislative and ministerial capacity; or whether, in order to ratify such laws as they had the right of suggesting and proposing, it was necessary to obtain the consent and sanction of the people. In a question, to which, from the uncertainty of all that regards the early history of the Romans, it is not possible to give a positive answer, and where the opinions of historians are nothing more than their own conjectures, we may be allowed, like them, to reason according to what appears most probable. Since, therefore, it is a certain fact, that the regal dignity itself was elective, and that the choice lay in the people, it seems a natural presumption, that the people, acquiring and retaining so important a right, would not have abandoned every other article of their power or consequence. At the same time, it must be owned, that the right of electing the kings does not appear to have been a conventional prerogative of the people: but to have been, probably, the consequence of the first king's dying a violent death, without leaving children, —a circumstance which must necessarily have occasioned an election to the vacant office. But be this as it may, it is certainly probable, that the people who elected the official lawgiver would likewise assume or reserve to themselves some restraining or controlling influence in the laws to be enacted. The kings, we therefore suppose, submitted to the consideration of the people, in the comitia, those laws which they were desirous of enacting, and took their sense by the majority of suffrages.

These laws, after the expulsion of the Tarquins, were collected into one body by Papirius, or Papisius, a patrician: and from him took the name of *Jus Civile Papirianum*, or *Papisianum*. But in the beginning of the commonwealth, such was considered to be the imperfection of this code and its want of authority, that it fell entirely into neglect, and all judicial proceedings were regulated either by custom or the opinions of individual magistrates. In this situation the want of a regular system of jurisprudence, which should be a standard of procedure to all the judges, and a known and fixed rule of conduct for the people, began to be universally felt. Commissioners, as we have seen, were at length appointed to frame and digest such a code.

The Decemviri engrossed in their collection several of the ancient laws of the kings. They retained likewise all the more recent laws which had been passed in favor of the people, as that

was a condition stipulated at the time of their appointment to office: and on the report of the deputies said to have been sent into Greece for collecting the laws of the different republics, they borrowed from them such as they judged most suitable to the Roman constitution. These laws, after being exposed for a certain time in the forum, and submitted to the judgment of the people, who it does not appear made any alteration in them, were engraven on ten tables of brass, to which two others were added a short time afterwards. These Twelve Tables became the basis of the Roman jurisprudence. Livy remarks, that in his time, amidst the infinite number of additional laws, these continued to possess the greatest authority. And Cicero, speaking of the Twelve Tables, gives them the highest encomium, affirming that they throw great light on the manners and customs of ancient times, and contain more wisdom than the libraries of all the philosophers.* It was, he tells us, a common practice for the youth to commit these laws to memory.

The laws of the Twelve Tables were classed in the following order. The *first* table enacted the form of judicial proceedings before the several tribunals. In the *second* were classed the laws regarding theft, breach of trust, and robbery. The *third* treated of debtors and creditors; the *fourth* of the *patria potestas*, or powers which a father had over his children; the *fifth* of inheritances and guardianships; the *sixth* contained the laws regarding property and possession; the *seventh* related to the punishment of different crimes and delicts; the *eighth* contained regulations regarding land estates, public roads, boundaries, and plantations; the *ninth* related to the privileges of the people, or the rights of Roman citizens; the *tenth* contained the regulation of funerals; the *eleventh* treated of religion and the worship of the gods; and the *twelfth* enacted regulations regarding marriage, and the rights of husbands and wives.†

This digest of jurisprudence gave, on the whole, great satisfaction to all ranks of men; but among the statutes of the last table was one law most impolitic in the present situation of affairs, and

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* Plurima, inquit Crassus, est in XII Tabulis antiquitatis effigies, quod et verborum prisca vetustas cognoscitur, et actionum genera quædam majorum consuetudinem vitamque declarant: Sive quis civilem scientiam contempletur, quam Scævola non putat oratoris esse propriam, sed cujusdam ex alio genere prudentiæ, totam hanc descriptis omnibus civitatis utilitatibus, ac partibus, XII Tabulis contineri videbitis: sive quem ista præpotens et gloriosa philosophia delectat (dicam audacius,) hosce habet fontes omnium disputationum suarum, qui jure civili et legibus continentur.—Fremant licet omnes, dicam quod sentio: Bibliothecas, mehercule, omnium philosophorum unus mihi videtur XII Tabularum libellus, si quis legum fontes, et capita viderit, et auctoritatis pondere, et utilitatis ubertate superare.—*Cicero de Oratore*, lib. i.

† A brief analysis of the laws of the Twelve Tables, and a very perspicuous commentary on their import, is to be found in Rosini, Antiq. Rom., Dempsteri, lib. viii.

which produced accordingly all that rancor and animosity between the orders, which might have been expected. This was a law prohibiting all intermarriage between the patricians and plebeians —a law which the inferior order could not help regarding as a mark of infamy and scorn. It was naturally felt as such, and the popular magistrates were not remiss in cherishing and exaggerating that impression on the minds of the people. It gave rise to a keen and animated debate in the Comitia, which Livy has minutely detailed in the fourth book of his history. The speech of the tribune Canuleius, on that occasion, though doubtless owing its principal merit to the talents of the historian, is a noble specimen of eloquence, and of that judicious intermixture of argument and irony which is peculiarly suited to a popular assembly. The law itself, though carried at the time, and engrossed among those of the Twelve Tables, was not of long duration. It was, in fact, the very first which the people, in their daily advancing progress to an equality of rights with the higher order, prevailed to have abrogated.

Thus we observe the Roman jurisprudence confined at first within very narrow bounds: a circumstance which necessarily gave great latitude to judges in the power of interpreting the statutes; and the inapplicability of these to the endless variety of cases must, of course, have greatly fomented the spirit of litigation. One admirable law, however, to be found in those tables, was the best antidote that could be devised for this enormous evil. This was an enactment, that all causes should be heard and determined in one day, between sunrise and sunset. This was a powerful restraint on every species of judicial chicanery, and operated as the best remedy against that delay, the worst of grievances, which often makes injustice itself more tolerable than the means of obtaining its redress.

From the laws of the Twelve Tables, the *Jurisconsulti* composed a system of forms and rules, by which the processes in the courts were conducted. The number of the laws was likewise increased, from time to time, by the *Plebiscita* and *Senatus consulta*: the former made by the people, without the authority of the senate, in the *Comitia tributa*; the latter enacted by the sole authority of the senate. To these we may add the laws framed by the authority of the *prætors*, after the institution of that magistracy, which was near a century posterior to the creation of the decemvirs. But of those different materials which composed the body of the Roman law, it is not necessary here to treat with greater amplitude.

The *decemviri*, like most men new in office, conducted themselves at first with much wisdom and moderation: each of them by turns presided as chief magistrate of the state, during a single day, having the fasces carried before him in token of sovereign power. The nine others had no other distinguishing symbol than

a single officer who preceded them, called *Accensus*. The presiding magistrate assembled the senate, took their advice, and carried into execution the result of their joint determination in the ordinary business of the commonwealth, but the whole decemviri applied with equal diligence to the administration of justice. They met every morning in the forum, to give audience to all complaints and processes. They seemed to be animated solely by the desire of maintaining public order; nor was there any symptoms of jealousy or party spirit. Even Appius Claudius, whom his colleagues seem to have regarded as the first in rank, affected no superiority. He conducted himself with [illegible] popularity; and while he rendered impartial justice to those of every rank and station, he behaved with gentleness and courtesy to the meanest citizen. We shall presently see the purpose of this ambitious man.

The term of administration of the new magistrates had almost expired, when it was found necessary to make a supplement to the laws, of two additional tables. For that ostensible purpose, but more probably from the desire of preventing the election of tribunes, the senate decreed that there should be a new appointment of decemviri. The people, who were equally pleased to be relieved from the consular government, as the patricians from the tribunate, approved of the measure. Several senators aspired to the new office; while the artful Appius, with a show of modesty, affected to decline it. He was, therefore, chosen to preside at the election of the new decemviri, and thus entitled to give the first suffrage. To the surprise of all, he named himself, and suggested six others of the patrician order, and three of the plebeian. Such was the popularity he had acquired, and such the satisfaction of the people, in being admitted to a share in this important and honorable office, that his nomination was received with loud applauses, and immediately agreed to; however displeasing we may presume it was to those of the higher order, who either envied the power, or penetrated into the ambitious designs of this artful man.

The colleagues whom Appius had named for himself were all men devoted to his interest, and, therefore, they followed an uniform system of measures. Resolved to retain their office for life, they determined no more to assemble either the Senate or the *Comitia*, but, in virtue of the plenary powers annexed to their office, to cut off all appeal—to support jointly the separate measures and decrees of each—and thus to perpetuate in their own persons a sovereign, absolute, and uncontrolled authority. This bold purpose, or at least the measures adopted for its accomplishment, it seems extremely difficult to reconcile to common prudence. All approaches to tyranny, if planned by wisdom, are gradual; and it is nothing less than madness in a magistrate to proclaim a purpose of tyrannizing upon his first entering upon office.

But, whatever we may judge of the designs of these decemvirs, it is certain that they endeavored to maintain their authority by extreme violence, and as certain that they became almost immediately the objects of public indignation. From their first appearance in the forum, they were preceded by twelve lictors, who constantly carried the fasces armed with axes. Their suite was commonly composed of a number of the most licentious patricians; profligates loaded with debt or stained with crimes; men whose pleasure lay in every species of excess, and who contributed a desperate aid to those ministers whose power protected them in their lawless excesses.

Such was the miserable situation of Rome under her new governors, that many of the principal citizens betook themselves for refuge to the allied states. It was no wonder that the Æqui and Volsci, those perpetual enemies of the Romans, should judge this a favorable season for an attack upon the territory of the republic. In this emergency, the decemviri became sensible of their want of that substantial power which is founded on popularity: they were obliged to convoke the senate, and thus acknowledge the necessity of a decree of that body before a single citizen would enter the rolls. By the senate's decree, three bodies of troops were raised; two marched against the enemy, and with them eight of the decemvirs. Appius and one of his colleagues remained the other body in Rome, for the defence of the city and the support of their own authority, which an outrage of the most flagrant nature was now very speedily to bring to its termination.

Appius, sitting in judgment in his tribunal, had cast his eyes upon a young woman of uncommon beauty, who daily passed through the forum, in her way to the public schools. Virginia, a maiden of fifteen years of age, was the daughter of a plebeian, a centurion, at that time absent with the army. Appius had been informed of her situation: she was betrothed to Icilius, formerly one of the tribunes, then serving against the enemy; and their marriage was to be celebrated as soon as the campaign was at an end: an obstacle which served only to increase the passion of this flagitious magistrate, who determined, at all hazards, to secure her as his prey. After many fruitless attempts to corrupt the fidelity of those domestics to whom Virginius had left the charge of his daughter, (for she had lost her mother,) Appius devised a scheme which he thought could not fail to put Virginia entirely within his power. He employed Marcus Claudius, one of his dependents, a infamous and shameless man, to claim the young woman as his own property. Marcus pretended that she was the daughter of one of his female slaves, who had sold her when an infant to the wife of Virginius, who had no children. He therefore pretended to reclaim what was his own, and attempted by force to carry her home to his house. The people interposed with great earnestness to protect the young woman; and Marcus,

declaring that he meant nothing but what was just and lawful, brought his claim before the tribunal of the decemvir. Numitorius, the uncle of Virginia, represented that her father, the guardian and protector of his child, was at this time absent, and in arms for the defence of his country. He asked a delay only of two days, in order to send for him from the camp, and demanded, in the mean time, that, as her nearest relation, the damsel should be committed to his care. The decemvir, with the show of much candor, allowed that there was good reason in the request of sending for Virginius, which he therefore immediately granted, but urged at the same time that this delay ought not to be prejudicial to the right of a master who claimed his slave. He therefore decreed that Marcus should take the young woman to his house, on giving security to produce her upon the return of her father. The flagrant injustice of this decree excited a cry of universal indignation. Marcus, advancing to lay hold of Virginia, was repulsed by the people, and particularly by Icilius, her intended husband, who, being apprized of the affair, had flown in rage and distraction to the forum. The tumult became so violent, that Appius, alarmed for his own safety, though proper to suspend the execution of his decree, and to allow the young woman to remain under the protection of her friends till the arrival of her father. He despatched, in the meantime, a messenger to the army, desiring that his colleagues would on no account permit Virginius to quit the camp. But this unfortunate man, whom his friends had found means to inform of the situation of his child, was already on his way. He got to Rome without hindrance, and, to the confusion of the decemvir, appeared next day in the forum supporting in his arms his daughter drowned in tears. An immense crowd attended; and all awaited the issue of this interesting question, their breasts alternately agitated with fear, with compassion, and indignation.

Appius, determined to prosecute his purpose, had ordered the troops to surround the forum. He now called on Marcus to make his demand, and to produce the proofs of his claim. To these Virginius was at no loss to give the most satisfactory answers, which fully exposed the villany of the imposture. Appius was not to be thus foiled. With the most unparalleled effrontery, he stood forth as a witness as well as a judge; declaring that it was consistent with his own knowledge that the plea of Marcus was true. He therefore gave his final sentence, that the slave should be delivered up to her lawful master, and ordered his officers to enforce, without delay, the execution of his decree. The soldiers were removing the crowd, and Marcus, together with the lictors, was advancing to seize Virginia, who clung for protection around the neck of her father. "There is," said he, "but one way, my dear child, to save thy honor and preserve thy liberty." Then seizing a knife from the stall of a butcher—"Thus," said he, striking her to the heart, "thus, I send thee to thy forefathers, un-

polluted and a free woman." Then turning to the tribunal of Appius, "Thou monster!" cried he, "with this blood I devote thy head to the infernal gods!" Appius, in a transport of rage, called out to the lictors to seize Virginius; but he, rushing out from the forum, and making way for himself with the knife which he held in his hand, while the multitude favored his escape, got safe without the city, and arrived in a few hours at the camp. Meantime Numitorius and Icilius exposed the bleeding body to the sight of the whole people, who, inflamed to the highest pitch of fury, would have torn Appius to pieces, had he not found means to escape amidst the tumult, and to conceal himself in the house of one of his friends.

Valerius and Horatius, two of the senators, men of consular dignity, and who had opposed the last creation of decemviri, now put themselves at the head of the people. They promised them the redress of all their wrongs, and the abolition of those hated magistrates; but urged that they should first wait the resolution of the army, which could not fail to coincide with their own.

The unfortunate Virginius had no sooner acquainted his fellow-soldiers of what had happened, than there was a general insurrection. Without regard to the orders of the decemvirs in the camp, the whole army, headed by their centurions, marched to Rome, and, retiring to the Aventine mount, chose ten leaders, with the title of military tribunes. They then declared their determined purpose of abolishing the decemvirate, and reestablishing the consular government, together with the tribunes of the people. The senate was assembled. The decemvirs thought proper voluntarily to resign their office. Valerius and Horatius were chosen consuls; and the popular magistrates, the tribunes, were elected with the same powers as formerly, which reinstated the people at once in all their rights and privileges.

Among the tribunes first chosen were Virginius, Icilius, and Numitorius. It may be believed that their vengeance against the infamous Appius was not long delayed. Virginius cited him before the people, at whose orders he was seized and thrown into prison, where, a few days after, he was found dead. It was suspected, says Dionysius, that he was privately strangled by order of the tribunes; but other authors, with more probability, affirm that he chose to escape a certain and ignominious fate by a voluntary death. His colleague Oppius, the chief abettor of his crimes, had the same catastrophe, and the rest underwent a voluntary banishment, while their goods were forfeited to the public use. Such is the history of the decemvirate, that inauspicious and short-lived magistracy, which was thus violently terminated in the third year after its institution.*

* An amusing comparison may be made of the talents of the two great his-

# CHAPTER VI.

Law against intermarriage of Patricians and Plebeians repealed.—Military Tribunes created—Creation of Censors—Their high powers of office—A regular pay assigned to the Army introduces a new balance into the Constitution—Consequences of—Siege of Veii—Romans begin to extend their conquests—Reflections on the state of the Republic at this period—War with the Gauls—Its fabulous aspect—New popular Laws—Institution of the office of Prætor,—of Quæstor—of Ædile—Licinian law limiting property in land

No sooner was tranquillity in some measure reestablished in the city of Rome, than the consuls Valerius and Horatius, at the head of a large army, animated with the spirit of patriotism which the late events had strongly stimulated, marched against the enemy. The Volsci and Æqui sustained a complete defeat; but the senate, jealous, as it said, of the too great popularity of the successful generals, thought proper to refuse them the honors of a triumph. The consuls, indignant at this insult, appealed to the people, who unanimously decreed them this reward of their services. Thus the senate most imprudently threw away its privileges; and every day gave some new accession of weight to the scale of the people.

Two powerful barriers which at this time subsisted between the patricians and plebeians, were the law which prevented the intermarriage of these orders, and another ordinance which excluded the plebeians from the consulate and higher offices of the state. It was only necessary to remove these two obstructions, to bring the separate ranks to a perfect equality in every substantial privilege of Roman citizens; and the plebeians were determined to leave no means untried for the accomplishment of this end.

On the occasion of a new war, the ordinary device was practised of refusing to enter the rolls. In this purpose the people were

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torians of the Roman republic, Livy and Dionysius of Halicarnassus, in the accounts they have given of that celebrated event, the death of Virginia by the hand of her father, and its important consequences. In Livy, we have a concise, clear, and animated narrative, where no circumstance is superfluous, no observation strained or far-fetched, nor any thing omitted which contributes to the effect of the picture. In Dionysius, we wade through a minute detail of facts, and a laborious legal discussion, resembling the report of a law-process in which every argument is brought forward, and every reflection anticipated, that the mind can form upon the case. It is easy to judge which method of writing is best adapted to historical composition. Vide Liv. lib. iii. c. 44—59, and Dion. Hal., Ant. Rom., lib. xi.

obstinate; and the tribunes proposed, as the only expedient to bring them to compliance, that the law against intermarriage should be repealed; a measure which, they urged, would be equally advantageous for both parties, as it would tend to an union of their interests, and put an end to those perpetual jealousies and contentions which were so ruinous to the republic.

There were three different modes by which marriage could be contracted among the Romans. The marriages of the patricians were celebrated in the presence of ten witnesses, and with a variety of religious ceremonies peculiar to their order. The plebeians married after two different forms: the one was by a species of sale, *emptio venditio*; and the other by the simple cohabitation of the parties for a year, which by law constituted a marriage. Religion, therefore, made a barrier between the patricians and plebeians in this article; and this necessarily constituted the principal objection against the repeal of the law. The senate, however, saw the necessity of some concessions; and they judged that, by granting this request, they would put a stop to any further claims, at least for the present. But they were mistaken. The spirit of encroachment is never allayed by concession. This law was no sooner repealed than the people, with the same obstinacy, refused to enrol themselves till a second law was passed, admitting them to the capacity of holding all the offices of the republic.

No measure could be more galling than this to the pride of the patricians; but the necessity was extreme, as the enemy was at the gates of Rome. The senate sought a palliative to content both parties. It was determined to suspend for a time the office of the consuls, and to create in their place six military tribunes, with a similar extent of power, three of whom should be patricians and three plebeians. This proposal was heartily embraced by the people, who, provided they were admitted to the chief dignity of the state, did not value under what title it was; and the senators, on the other hand, flattered themselves that, having preserved the consulship inviolate, they would soon be able to restore that magistracy. While they were thus soothing themselves with shadowy distinctions, it was very evident that they were daily losing substantial power.

It was customary for those who were candidates for any magistracy to appear in the *Comitia*, clad in white apparel. The plebeians, who aspired to the military tribunate, appeared accordingly in that dress; but as the votes were called by centuries, and the patricians had been at some pains to influence their dependents, it happened that not one of the plebeians was elected. Three months afterward, the military tribunes, as had been preconcerted, resigned their office on pretence of some irregularity in their election. A powerful canvass was now set on foot by the plebeians to make good their pretensions to the new magis-

tracy: but differing in their choice of candidates, and finding it impossible to arrive at an unanimity of sentiment, they consented, rather than yield to each other, that the consulate should, in the meantime, be vacated; and these jealousies being artfully kept alive by the patricians, it thus happened that there was no election of military tribunes for several years.

War and domestic dissensions had prevented the consuls from making the usual census or numeration of the people, for a great many years; so that much confusion had arisen in the levying of the taxes, from ignorance of the exact number of the citizens, and the proportion of burdens to be levied from individuals. To remedy this evil, the consuls being now usually too much occupied to make the census regularly every five years, the senate created two new magistrates under the title of *censors;* an office which became afterwards of the highest respectability, and was given only to persons of consular dignity.

The most important privilege of the censors, and which, in fact, rendered their authority formidable to all ranks in the state, was the right they possessed of inspecting the morals, and examining into the conduct of all the citizens. It was in virtue of this high prerogative that, as Livy remarks, they kept in dependence both the senate and people. They possessed a constitutional power of degrading such as had manifested any irregularity of conduct, and depriving them of the rank and office which they held in the state. It was not an authority which extended to the punishment of those ordinary crimes and delicts which fall under the penal laws of a state. But there are offences which, in point of example, are worse than crimes, and more pernicious in their consequences. It is not the breach of express laws that can ever be of general bad effect, or tend to the destruction of a government; but it is that silent and unpunishable corruption of manners, which, undermining private and public virtue, weakens and destroys those springs to which the best ordered constitution owes its support. The counteracting this latent principle of decay was the most useful part of the office of the censors. If any citizen had improvidently contracted large debts; if he had consumed his fortune in extravagance, or in living beyond his income; if he had been negligent in the cultivation of his lands; nay, if, being in good circumstances and able to maintain a family, he had declined, without just cause, to marry,—all these offences attracted the notice of the censors, who had various modes of inflicting a penalty. The most usual, and not the least impressive, was a public denunciation of the offender as an object of disapprobation—*ignominiâ notabant*. It did not amount to a mark of infamy; but punished solely by inflicting the shame of a public reprimand. A penalty, however, of this kind is not fitted to operate on all dispositions, and accordingly the censors had it in their power to employ means more generally effectual. They could degrade a

senator from his dignity and strike his name out of the roll. They could deprive a knight of his rank, by taking from him the horse which was maintained for him at the public expense, and was the essential mark of his station. A citizen might be punished by degrading him from his tribe to an inferior one, or doubling his proportion of the public taxes. These, being arbitrary powers, might have been greatly abused: but on the other hand, it is to be observed, that no decree of the censors was unalterable: it might be suspended, or altogether taken off by a sentence of the ordinary judges, or by a decree of the censors of the succeeding *Lustrum*. Cicero tells us, that Cains Gesa, who had been degraded from his rank of senator by the censors, was reinstated in his dignity by their successors, and even made a censor himself; and Livy relates a similar instance of Valerius Messala.

The censorship, from these extensive powers, was accounted the most honorable office of the commonwealth. From the time of the second Punic war, the censors were always chosen from such persons as had held the consulship. After the termination of the republican government, the censorship was exercised by the emperors, and justly regarded as one of the most honorable and important branches of the imperial function.

The dissensions between the orders still continued, with little variety either in the grievances complained of on the part of the people, or in the modes of obtaining or rather compelling a redress of them. The last resource of the plebeians, and which they generally found effectual, was, on the emergency of a war, to refuse to enter the rolls until the senate granted their demands. The latter body now bethought itself of an expedient which it is rather surprising they had not sooner adopted: this was to purchase the service of the army by giving a regular pay to the troops. Hitherto, in all the military enterprises, the citizens enrolled, served upon their own charges. It was a tax incumbent on every Roman to support himself during war, which being alike a burden on every free citizen, was not regarded as a grievance, but as the reasonable price which he paid for his liberty and security. Yet this circumstance necessarily limited the duration of their warlike operations to a very short period; for when the army was embodied, the lands of the poorer citizens, who had no slaves, were entirely neglected. This policy, therefore, was not only ruinous to the people, but repressed all enlargement of the Roman territory, and was an insuperable bar to extensive and permanent conquests.

The senate now resolved to adopt a new system. They ordained that, in future, the foot soldiers should have a regular pay from the public treasury, to defray which burden a tax should be imposed on all the members of the commonwealth in proportion to their means. The people, who did not penetrate the motive of this important measure, but looked only to the im-

mediate advantage it promised in relieving them from what they had always felt a very heavy burden, were fully satisfied with the new arrangement. The tribunes, however, either looking further into consequences, or perhaps jealous of any measure which, promising an harmonious agreement between the orders, diminished their own consequence as magistrates, were at much pains to persuade the people that the bounty of the patricians was always to be suspected, and sought by every means to frustrate the new project. They failed, however, of their purpose. The manifest advantage of the measure prevailed over all opposition. The patricians set the example, and began the contribution, fairly paying their contingents according to the value of their estates. The money was seen passing to the treasury in loaded wagons, and the poorer citizens, pleased with the sight, paid their shares with the utmost alacrity, anticipating the return of their money with high profit into their own pockets.*

From this period we shall see the Roman system of war assume a new appearance. The senate henceforward always found soldiers at command: the state was consequently enabled to engage in extensive enterprises and support long campaigns: every success was more signal and important, because it was maintained and prosecuted; and every conquest was turned to permanent advantage. A most material consequence likewise arose to the constitution of the republic: the senate, by command over the troops, obtained a favorable balance to its otherwise decreasing authority.

One of the first measures which owed its success to this change in the Roman art of war was the siege of Veii, a city at that time equal in extent and population to Rome, and a formidable rival to her power and ascendency among the states of Italy. A formal siege was a new attempt to the Romans, who had hitherto limited their enterprises to small towns, which they could take by surprise or storm. In their ancient mode of attacking towns, their most refined manœuvre was the *circuit*, which was performed by surrounding the place and attacking it at once on every quarter. A city capable of resisting this assault was deemed impregnable. The Romans, who were now in a capacity to form lengthened enterprises, were, from that circumstance, a great overmatch for any of the surrounding states, as well as from the improvement we must suppose the art of war underwent from its now becoming a profession instead of an occasional employment. The dominion of Rome had been hitherto confined to the territory of a few miles around the city: we shall now see how rapid

* We are not informed by any of the ancient writers what pay was allotted to the Roman soldiers at this period; but in the time of Polybius, that is, at the era of the second Punic war, each foot soldier was allowed two *oboli* a day,—a centurion double that pay.

was the extension of her bounds, and the strength acquired by her conquests.

The siege of Veii was prolonged for ten years. An army wintering on the field was a thing till then quite unexampled; and during the whole time of this siege, the tribunes, who suffered no occasion to pass unimproved that promised to excite discord and domestic faction, loudly complained that this detestable war was nothing else than a conspiracy against liberty; a design to weaken the party of the plebeians, by depriving them of the suffrages of those who were with the army, while the latter, as they hinted, were to be inhumanly sacrificed in order to give the patricians the entire command of the commonwealth. Having full conviction of these designs, the patriotic tribunes left it their duty to oppose the levying the tax for furnishing the military pay. The army of course soon began to mutiny; and the conspiracy must have been the abandonment and defeat of the enterprise, had not the patricians found means to soothe them by electing one of their number to the military tribunate. This well-timed sacrifice of a little power taken from the scale of the higher order, quieted the spirit of the opposition, and the campaign was not frustrated of its supplies.

The siege of Veii proceeded, as we have said, very slowly; and during its continuance, Rome was afflicted both by real and by imaginary calamities. A dreadful pestilence broke out; and the books of the Sibyls were consulted, which declared that the only remedy was a *Lectisternium*, a ceremony now performed for the first time. An invitation was given to the chief gods of the Roman state, to partake of a splendid festival prepared for them with uncommon expense. The statues of Jupiter, Apollo, Latona, Diana, Hercules, Mercury, and Neptune, were laid upon three magnificent beds, and for eight days the most sumptuous banquets were presented to these images, which of course were eaten by their priests and partly distributed to the populace. During that time, the gates of the city were open to all strangers: the courts of law were shut, and all litigation suspended; the prisoners were set at liberty, and every citizen kept open tables for all comers. Although, perhaps, this ceremony might owe its origin to superstition alone, it is not impossible that it might actually have been attended with salutary effects. It is well known that in epidemic and contagious diseases, nothing so much predisposes to infection as fear and apprehension. A jubilee of this kind, by exhilarating the spirits of the people, and banishing for a while care and anxiety, might naturally contribute to check the diffusion, and abate the violence of the contagion.

Veii was still blockaded; and as this enterprise greatly engrossed the minds of the public, every thing in that age of superstition was construed into a good or a bad omen. The lake of Alba increased prodigiously, and deputies were sent to inquire what the

gods meant by that extraordinary phenomenon. The deputies brought back word that the conquest of Veii depended on draining the lake, and that particular care should be taken to convey the waters to the sea; (a most wise and salutary advice, in a season of contagious disease.) The work was immediately begun; and that fine canal was cut, which subsists at this day, and conveys the waters of the lake Albano, by *Castel-Gondolfo*, to the sea. This was likewise an instance in which the faith of the people in the veracity of the prediction might have greatly aided its accomplishment. In the present case, however, it is probable that the valor of the besieged Veientes had powerful incitements, and perhaps from a similar improvement of popular prejudices to wise purposes: for Veii continued for a long period of time to baffle every effort of the Roman power. At length, in the tenth year of the siege, Marcus Furius Camillus was chosen dictator, an intrepid and skilful general, who had the honor of finishing this obstinate war, by the taking of the city in the 358th year of Rome, and 391 B. C.

The Romans had but very few laws of a political nature, or such as regulated the form of their governments, or defined the constitutional powers and rights of the distinct orders of the state. It is, therefore, no matter of surprise, to find that perpetual contest between those orders, giving rise to all that series of petty revolutions, which form almost entirely the history of the Roman republic, for the period of above four centuries. During the regal government, the people had, in reality, more genuine liberty, than for some time after its abolition, while the constitution was almost purely aristocratical: for the kings, though they sought to humble the aspiring patricians, were extremely moderate towards the plebeians, who were thus brought very near to a level with the superior order. But under the aristocracy which followed the expulsion of the king, the patricians, who were the governors of the state, made it their principal object to increase and confirm their power, by reducing the plebeians to absolute submission and dependence. Hence, those oppressive measures, which at length produced that stubborn opposition and resistance on the part of the people, which nothing could allay but the concession of creating magistrates from their own order, and giving them a constitutional weight and legal influence in the state. This important step being once surmounted, every subsequent struggle of parties added fresh weight to the popular scale: and there were now two separate bodies in the republic, each eagerly contending for its sovereignty, and studious of every method of humbling and abasing the other.

It cannot be said that the Romans were at this time a free people, for neither of the orders was really so. The patricians were not free, for they were amenable to the popular assemblies, a court where the judges were their jealous rivals and natural

enemies. Nor could the plebeians be said to enjoy liberty, for they neither enjoyed the security of property nor of person, from the extreme rigor of the laws regarding debtors, in which situation the great mass of the people stood with respect to the richer citizens. Even in the popular assemblies, when the *comitia* were called in the order of the centuries, the people met, only to witness the enactment of laws, which commonly struck against their own liberties; not to mention the right of the senate at any time to nominate a dictator who had absolute authority in the state.

The plebeians, however, under all these disadvantages, were, as we have seen, advancing, step by step, to an equality with the patricians in the enjoyment of all the offices of the commonwealth, which they now very soon obtained. It is easy to discern that this single circumstance—the election of the chief magistrates in the comitia held by centuries—formed now the only obstacle to an equality of power between the orders. It may, perhaps, be supposed, that at this period of the commonwealth, when many of the plebeians had acquired considerable wealth, and consequently came to be arranged in the first or higher classes, the number of these rich plebeians would frequently turn the ballance, even in the *comitia centuriata*, in favor of their own order; and so, in fact, it did sometimes happen; but this was not usual: for as the censors had the power of arrangement, they commonly took care that the first classes, though composed in part of wealthy plebeians, should have in them, at least, a considerable majority of patricians, which secured the vote of the whole class.

In order to overcome this manifest disadvantage to their order, the popular magistrates might have followed either of the two different plans. The one, the most difficult of accomplishment, was the procuring the election of the higher magistrates to be made in the *comitia tributa*; the other, in case they failed in that attempt, was to bring about the same order of voting in the *comitia centuriata*, or to make the lot determine which class should take the lead in giving their suffrage. And it has been supposed that they did effect something of this nature: for Livy speaks of the *prerogative class* in the election of the higher magistrates, which was the term used to signify that class in the *comitia tributa*, on which the lot fell to vote first. Livy, however, in this expression, might mean nothing more than to signify that class which, in point of *rank*, was entitled to vote first; so that no conclusive argument can be founded on this indefinite expression he has used.

The siege and conquest of Veii was a presage of the future grandeur of the Roman state. It was impossible for the small, detached, and independent states of Italy to withstand a nation always in arms, whose high ambition and unremitting perseverance were equal to the projecting and accomplishing of any enter-

prise in the way of conquest. It might naturally be supposed, that those smaller states, aware of the great advantage which Rome had gained by her system of professionary soldiers, would either imitate her in adopting the same plan, or at least take precaution, by an extensive system of offensive and defensive alliance between themselves, to guard against this formidable and encroaching power; but it does not appear that either of these measures was adopted; and the consequence was, that signal inferiority which was the cause of their [illegible] to the Roman arms.

The conquest of Veii was succeeded by a war with the Gauls. This formidable people—alone a cause of serious alarm to the Roman power—was a branch of the great ancient nation of the *Celtæ*.* They are said to have first entered Italy in the reign of Tarquinius Priscus. They opened to themselves a passage through the Alps, made four different irruptions, and settled themselves in the northern part of the Peninsula, between the Alps and Apennines, from which they had expelled the Etruscans, and built for themselves several cities. They had been settled in this country above 200 years, when, under the command of Brennus, (A. U. C. 362,) they laid siege to Clusium. The Etruscans solicited the aid of the Romans, who sent some deputies in order to mediate a reconciliation; but these deputies, being provoked by the pride of the barbarians, joined themselves to the Etrurian army, and made an attack on the Gauls; a breach of the law of nations, for which Brennus immediately sent to Rome to demand satisfaction. The Romans were not inclined to grant it; but imprudently justified, and even conferred honor on, the offending delegates. The consequence was, that Brennus, raising the siege of Clusium, marched directly to Rome.

There is nothing which tends more to encourage doubts regarding the authenticity of the Roman history at this period, than the circumstances which their writers have recorded of this war with the Gauls. Three years before its commencement, the Roman citizens capable of bearing arms amounted, according to the numeration of the censors, to above 150,000 men. After the first engagement with the Gauls, in which a Roman army amounting to 40,000 was defeated, we find Rome so absolutely defenceless, that the barbarians entered the city without opposition, and massacred the senators in cold blood, who were sitting patiently

* The more ancient Greek writers bestow the name of *Celtæ* indifferently on the Gauls and Germans. Others confine that appellation to the natives of Gaul proper; while some authors include under it the Spaniards, countenanced in that notion by the term *Celtiberians*. The name Celtæ, however, in the Roman writers, seems to be applied exclusively to the inhabitants of Gallia, or that country of which Cæsar, in the beginning of his Commentaries, has accurately described the limits.

waiting for death at the doors of their houses. The Gauls then set fire to the city, which they burned to the ground. About a thousand inhabitants shut themselves up in the capitol, which still held out against the enemy; but this fortress would have been surprised and taken by assault in the night, had not some geese, more wakeful than the sentinels, alarmed the garrison by their screaming, and thus defeated the enemy's escalade. The garrison, however, was soon reduced to extremity from want of provisions, and a capitulation ensued, by which the Romans agreed to purchase a peace for a certain price in solid gold, which the Gauls were weighing out with false weights, when Camillus, with a large army, (how assembled we are left to guess,) most seasonably came to the relief of his country, and engaging the enemy, obtained so complete a victory, that in one day's time there was not a single Gaul remaining within the territory of Rome. Is it not surprising that the sagacious Livy should gravely relate, as a piece of authentic history, such facts as are utterly irreconcilable to common probability?

The destruction of Rome by the Gauls is said to have given rise to a scheme which was eagerly promoted by the tribunes of the people, the removal of the seat of government to Veii. Camillus opposed the measure in an animated oration, which is recorded, or rather composed, by Livy.* But the orator's eloquence would probably have failed of its effect, had not popular superstition contributed to aid his counsels. A centurion, mustering his men in the forum, called out to one of the standard-bearers, "Here fix your banners; here we shall do best to remain."† The omen was received by a general acclamation of the people, and all design of abandoning the city was instantly laid aside.

Rome, desolated and burnt to the ground, seems very speedily to have recovered from her misfortunes; for we find, in a very few years, a renewal of the same intestine disorders, the same jealousies and obstinate contention for power between the patricians and plebeians, which in fact for about two centuries form all that is interesting in the history of the Roman commonwealth.

It is somewhat extraordinary that most of the revolutions of the Roman state should have owed their origin to women. To a woman, Rome owed the abolition of the regal dignity and the establishment of the republic. To a woman, she owed her delivery from the tyranny of the decemviri, and the restoration of the consular government; and to a woman, we shall now see, she owed that change of the constitution by which the plebeians became capable of holding the highest offices of the commonwealth.

Marcus Fabius Ambustus had given one of his daughters in

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* Liv. v. 51, &c.

† Signifer, statue signum:—hic manebimus optimè. Liv. v. 55.

marriage to Licinius Stolo, a plebeian, and the other to Servius Sulpitius, a patrician, and at that time one of the military tribunes. One day, when the wife of the plebeian was at her sister's house, the lictor who walked before Sulpitius, on his return from the senate, knocked loudly at the door with the staff of the fasces, to give notice that the magistrate was coming in. This noise, to which the wife of Licinius was not accustomed, threw her into a panic. Her sister laughed at her alarm, and threw out a malicious jest on the inequality of their conditions. A very small matter, says Livy, is sufficient to disturb the quiet of a woman's mind. The younger Fabia took this affront most seriously to heart. She complained to her father, who, to comfort her, promised that he would do his utmost endeavor that her husband should have his lictor as well as her elder sister's. This trifling circumstance is said to have been the cause of the admission of the plebeian order to the consular dignity.

Fabius concerted his plan with his son-in-law Licinius, and with Lucius Sextius, a young, enterprising plebeian. At the next election for the tribunes of the people, Licinius and Sextius had interest to be nominated to that office. One of their first measures was the proposal of three new laws. The first was in favor of debtors, and enacted that there should be an abatement of the principal sums due in proportion to the interest that had been paid on them. The second enacted that no Roman citizen should possess more than five hundred acres of land: and by the third it was proposed to be decreed that the military tribunate should henceforward be abolished, and two consuls elected, the one from the order of the patricians, the other from that of the plebeians.

The patricians, it may be believed, gave the strongest opposition to all these laws. They secured to their interest the colleagues of Sextius and Licinius, and by their *veto* the propositions were thrown out. Sextius, however, was not discouraged, but boldly threatened that he would make the higher order sensible of the power of his *veto* in return. He and his colleague Licinius had the address to be continued in office for five successive years, during all which time they obstinately opposed the election both of military tribunes and of consuls: so that in that period there were no other magistrates than the tribunes of the people and the ædiles.

Amidst these disorders, a war broke out with the inhabitants of Velitræ, and soon after with the Gauls. The senate had no other resource but to create a dictator; but that office, from being too frequent, had lost much of its respect and its terrors. Camillus, at the age of eighty, was, for the fifth time, appointed dictator: he was successful in defeating the enemy, but he could not repress the ambitious schemes of the tribunes. These magistrates, at length, by inflexible perseverance, carried their point. They obtained a decree of the people that the military tribunal should

be abolished, and that henceforth one of the consuls should be chosen from the order of the plebeians; and this important decree the senate was forced to confirm. Camillus proposed that there should be a new magistrate created from the patrician order, for the administration of justice; as the consuls, in their function of generals of the republic, had too much occupation to attend to their judicial duties. The people, extremely gratified by the great accession of power and privilege to their order, consented cheerfully to the proposal, and a new magistrate was created with the title of *Prætor*, an officer often mentioned in the Roman laws, and of very high dignity. He was decorated with the robe called the *prætexta*, bordered with purple; he had the *curule*, or ivory chair of state, and he was attended by a guard of six lictors. As the prætorship was formed by conferring on a separate magistrate what had formerly been a branch of the consular office, the patricians, who got this new office annexed to their order, had thus a sort of compensation for the important concessions they had made to the people. At first only one magistrate was created with the title of prætor; but afterwards the vast increase of civil causes occasioned the creation of many. In the time of Sylla there were *eight* prætors. Julius Cæsar increased the number to ten, and afterwards to sixteen; and the second triumvirate created no less than sixty-four prætors. After that time, we meet sometimes with twelve, and sometimes sixteen or eighteen prætors; but in the decline of the empire we commonly find no more than three. When the number of the prætors was thus increased, and the *quæstiones*, or trials for crimes were made perpetual, instead of being committed to officers chosen for the occasion, there was one prætor distinguished by the epithet of *urbanus*, who had the cognizance of civil suits, and the others were special judges in particular crimes or offences. The latter were therefore sometimes called *quæstores*, *quia quærebant de crimine*; the function of the former was simply *jus dicere*, or to judge in civil questions between the citizens. The era of the creation of this new magistracy, and of the admission of the plebeian order to the consulate, was the 386th year from the foundation of Rome. Two new ædiles were at the same time created from the patrician order, with the epithet of *curules* or *majores*; and their office was to take care of the temples, and to preside at the public games and spectacles.

The ambition of the principal plebeians was now satisfied, and the patricians had in return some small gratification by these new offices. It remained now only that the populace should likewise be gratified, and this was done by the Licinian law, which enacted that no Roman citizen should possess above five hundred acres of land, and that the surplus should be distributed at a settled and low rate of price among the poorest of the people. We must conclude that the territory of the republic was at this time very greatly enlarged, when such a regulation was either necessary or practicable.

It might have been expected that these new arrangements would have been attended, at least for some time, with public tranquillity; but this was a situation which the popular magistrates could not endure, for the authority and credit of the tribunes kept pace with the public disorders. These magistrates were at infinite pains to convince the people that, by consenting to the creation of the new offices of Prætor and Ædile, they had lost more power than they had gained by the admission of their order to the consulate. They therefore urged that it would be mean and pusillanimous to stop short in their pretensions till they had obtained an equal right with the patricians to all the dignities of the state, sacerdotal as well as civil.

The dissensions were therefore renewed with the same ardor as ever. A pestilence gave for some time a miserable interval of tranquillity. The priests, to put a stop to this calamity, which threatened to depopulate the city, tried every expedient which policy or superstition could devise. A *Lectisternium* was celebrated, and scenic representations were for the first time introduced at Rome, borrowed, it is said, from Etruria. But all was to no purpose. The plague, however, is recorded to have yielded at last to the ceremony of driving a nail into the temple of Jupiter. This, a French writer* remarks, was curing one contagious disease by another yet more contagious; meaning, no doubt, that the [illegible] of superstition is more than the pestilence—a sentiment which is not happily applied to the case of a rude people, whose superstitious prejudices are the safeguard of their morals, and will be cherished by a wise legislator as an engine of good policy.

The war still continued: the Gauls were ever making new attempts, and almost constantly with bad success. It was found expedient, however, very frequently to resort to the creation of a dictator; and such was the ascendency which the plebeians had now obtained, that even this supreme and despotic magistrate was sometimes chosen from their order. It might have been foreseen that the privilege of being elected to the consulate necessarily led to this—for it was the province of the *consuls* to name the *dictator*. The plebeians had by this time likewise obtained the curule ædileship; they had now nothing more to aspire to than the censorship, the prætorship, and the priesthood. The senate, with great weakness, but at the same time with great obstinacy, were always ready to renew their attempts at every new election to exclude the plebeians. They sometimes succeeded, but they always lost more by this opposition than they gained. They prevailed at one election that both consuls should be chosen from their order; but they could not prevent their rivals from fully indemnifying themselves by the election of a plebeian censor.

* Condillac.

## CHAPTER VII.

ROMAN HISTORY continued.—War with the Samnites.—Devotion of Decius.—Disgrace of the Caudine Forks.—Popular pretensions increase.—The Plebeians admitted to the Priesthood.—War with Pyrrhus, King of Epirus.—His Defeat.—Conquest of all Italy by the Romans.—Incorporation of the conquered Nations.—Manner in which the Rights of Citizenship were extended.

SOON after this time a war began with the people of Samnium; and it was this war which led the Romans to the conquest of all Italy. The Samnites inhabited a district to the south of the Roman territory, and separated from it by Latium. They had hitherto had no hostile interference with the Romans, and there was even a treaty of alliance subsisting between them; but the Latins, Hernici, Æqui, and Volsci, being now subdued, that is to say, so weakened that they were obliged either to become subjects or allies of the republic, the Romans now came to be the immediate neighbors of the Samnites, and of course their enemies. The city of Capua gave occasion to the war.

Capua was the principal city of Campania, one of the finest and most fertile countries of Italy. This city then was extremely opulent and luxurious. The Samnites, a poor but warlike people, were allured by the riches of their neighbors, and invaded Campania. The inhabitants of Capua, after some feeble attempts to resist the invaders, implored aid from the Romans. The senate answered, that their alliance with the Samnites prevented them from giving any thing else than their compassion. "If, then," said the Capuans, "you will not defend us, you will, at least, defend yourselves; and from this moment we give ourselves, our cities, our fields, and our gods, to the Romans, and become their subjects." The senate accepted the donation, and ordered the Samnites immediately to quit their territories. The necessary consequence was a war, in which the Romans were so successful, that in the third campaign the Samnites were glad to conclude a peace, and renew their treaty of alliance.

In the meantime, the Latins had recovered strength, and meditated to shake off the Roman yoke. A war was the consequence, memorable only for a singular instance of the most exalted patriotism in the consul Decius. This great man, together with his colleague, Torquatus, headed the Roman legions. It is said that both the consuls had had a dream, or seen a vision, which assured them that the infernal gods required that one of the contending

armies should be devoted to them, and one of the contending generals; and that the general who should have the heroism voluntarily to devote himself, would thus doom the army of the enemy to certain destruction. The two consuls agreed to make this heroic sacrifice; and it was concerted between them, as they commanded separate divisions of the army, that he whose division first gave way, should immediately devote himself to death. It was in the meantime strictly enjoined to the troops, that no soldier should, during the engagement, advance beyond his rank, as instances of frantic valor were then extremely common. The battle began; and Titus Manlius, the son of the consul Torquatus, being challenged by a Latin captain, accepted the summons, defeated his antagonist, and returned with his spoils to the main army. His father, with a true Roman severity, ordered his head to be struck off for disobedience. The left wing commanded by Decius having begun to give way, he caused the Pontifex Maximus to perform in haste the ceremony of consecration; then, girding himself closely with his robe, he spurred his horse with fury into the thickest of the enemies' battalions, where he was instantly cut to pieces. The Romans, now confident of success, rushed on, and the Latins were entirely defeated. The conquerors, by pursuing their success, might have annihilated the Latin name; but they chose to deal more humanely with the vanquished foe, and to preserve them in the character of allied states, on whom they imposed separate conditions of peace, according to the different degrees of merit or demerit which each had exhibited.

Meantime the war with the Samnites was renewed, and carried on for above ten years with various success; many of the other states of Italy taking a part in the quarrel. One event which much humbled the pride of the Romans, was the disgrace they underwent at Caudium. The Samnites, surprising them in a narrow defile near that town, (*Furcæ Caudinæ*,) had it in their power to cut them off to a man. Pontius, the general of the Samnites, made the whole Roman army, with the consuls at their head, naked and disarmed, pass under the yoke;—a scene described by Livy with great force of natural painting, in the beginning of the ninth book of his history. The historian relates, that when the consuls first informed the army of the fate which the enemy had decreed they should undergo, the soldiers vented their rage in execrations against their commanders, as the authors of this degradation, and were ready to tear them in pieces: but when the dreadful ceremony began, and when they saw the garments torn from the backs of the consuls, and those men whom they had been accustomed to regard with veneration, thus ignominiously treated, every one forgot his own calamity, and, filled with horror, turned aside his eyes, that he might not behold the miserable humiliation of the rulers of his country. It was evening when the Roman army was suffered to pass out of the defile; and when

night came on, naked and destitute of every thing, they threw themselves down in despair in a field near the city of Capua. The magistrates, senators, and chief men of the place, repaired to the spot where they lay, and endeavored to comfort and soothe their distress; but they spoke not a word, nor ever raised their heads from the ground. The next day they proceeded in the same melancholy dejection to Rome, where their disaster had occasioned the utmost consternation, and the whole city had gone into mourning.

By the treaty which the Romans signed after the disgrace of the *Furcæ Caudinæ*, they solemnly bound themselves no more to make war against the Samnites: but they fell upon a shameful device to elude the obligation. Postumius, one of the consuls, advised that the Romans should pay no regard to the treaty: but that he himself, and all who were actively concerned in making it, should be delivered up to the enemy, who might wreak their vengeance on them as they chose. This strange proposal was agreed to. Postumius, and the principal officers were sent in chains to Pontius, the general of the Samnites, who, with a generosity which their conduct had not merited, set them at liberty, though with a keen reproach of their shameful disregard of an obligation universally held most sacred.

We enter not into a minute detail of the war with the Samnites: it is to be found at large in Livy. It affords evidence of one fact of importance, that the Romans had now adopted the policy of exterminating, when they were desirous of securing a conquest. The Æqui, in the space of one campaign, lost forty towns, the greater part of which the Romans entirely demolished, and slaughtered the whole inhabitants.

The popular dissensions suffered very little intermission from these warlike enterprises. The priesthood was now the object of contest, and the pretence used by the patricians for excluding the inferior order from that dignity, was religious scruple: but it was not easy to convince the people, that the same rank which was adequate to the exercise of the highest offices of the state, would profane the priesthood; and a law was proposed, by two of the tribunes, and passed, which enacted that four new *pontifices* should be created, and five new augurs, and that both orders of the state should be equally eligible to those offices. Thus, all the dignities of the commonwealth were now open alike to both plebeians and patricians; and from this time, consequently, the sole nominal distinction was, that of *the senate and people of Rome*.

The Tarentines took part against the Romans in the war with the Samnites. This people, who were originally a Greek colony from Sparta, had acquired considerable wealth by commerce, and were of an indolent and luxurious character, very opposite to that of their parent state.* Alarmed at the progress of the Roman

* Justin, lib. 20.

arms, aware of their ambitious and domineering spirit, but unable to make any vigorous effort to resist them, they sought aid from Pyrrhus, the king of Epeirus, and invited him, by a flattering deputation, to be the deliverer of Italy from its threatened yoke of servitude. Pyrrhus was one of the ablest generals of his age; but he possessed a restless spirit, and a precipitancy in forming projects of military enterprise, without a due attention to means, or a deliberate estimate of consequences. Cineas, his chief minister, to whom he imparted his design of invading Italy, and mentioned, with great confidence, a perfect assurance of its success, calmly asked him what he purposed after that design was accomplished. "We shall next," said Pyrrhus, "make ourselves masters of Sicily, which, considering the distracted state of that island, will be a very easy enterprise." "And what next do you intend?" said Cineas. "We shall then," replied Pyrrhus, "pass over into Africa. Do you imagine Carthage is capable of holding out against our arms?" "And supposing Carthage taken," said Cineas, "what follows?" "Then," said Pyrrhus, "we return with all our forces, and pour down upon Macedonia and Greece." "And when all is conquered," replied Cineas, "what is then to be done?" "Why, then, to be sure," said Pyrrhus, "we have nothing to do but to enjoy our bottle, and take our amusement." "And what," said Cineas, "prevents you from enjoying your bottle now, and taking your amusement?" This dialogue, which is given by Plutarch, with great naiveté, presents us with a just delineation of the real views and sentiments of the greater part of those mighty conquerors who have disturbed the peace of the universe.

Pyrrhus brought to the aid of the Tarentines an army of 30,000 men. He was astonished that a war, in which they were a principal party, did not, in the least, interrupt the amusements of that frivolous and dissolute people. They gave him some magnificent festivals, and then purposed to leave him to fight, while they continued their entertainments.

This conduct, justly exciting both contempt and indignation, Pyrrhus ordered the theatres to be shut up, closed the public assemblies, where the Tarentines idly consumed the time in frivolous talk, and mustering the citizens, enjoined a continued and rigorous exercise to every man who was capable of bearing arms. So severely felt was this duty, that, it is said, a large number of the inhabitants actually fled from their country rather than suffer a deprivation of their usual pleasures.

Pyrrhus was, for some time, successful. The elephants in his army were a novel sight to the Romans, and, for awhile, gave him a great advantage. It is said, however, that this experienced general, the first time he came in sight of the Roman legions, was struck with their appearance, and with the military skill displayed in their arrangement. "The disposition of these barbarians," said

he, to one of his officers, "does not savor at all of barbarism. We shall presently see what they can perform." And, in fact, he very soon began to find that even his victories cost him so dear, that there was little room to hope for his ever achieving the conquest of Italy. The Romans soon became accustomed to his mode of fighting, and every campaign proved to him more and more unsuccessful. At length, wishing for an honorable pretext for dropping his enterprise, the Sicilians furnished it, by imploring his aid against the Carthaginians. Pyrrhus, accordingly, embarked his troops for Sicily, and during his absence for two years, the Romans reduced the Samnites, Tarentines, and their allies, to extremity. Pyrrhus returned, and made a last effort, near Beneventum, in the Samnian territory. He was totally defeated, lost 26,000 men, and taking the first opportunity of giving his allies the slip, he set sail for Epirus. The Samnites, the Tarentines, the Lucanians, Bruttians, and all the other states, submitted to the arms of the Romans; who were now, in the 480th year from the foundation of the city, masters of all Italy. It is to be observed, however, that, at this time, *Gallia Cisalpina*, or the country between the Apennines and Alps, was not comprehended under the name of Italy.

The policy of the Romans with regard to the nations which they conquered is worthy of some attention. The tribes into which the Roman citizens were divided were formerly, as we have seen, a local distinction. Matters were otherwise at this time. It had become a great exertion of political judgment to arrange the members of which the tribes were composed, as on that arrangement depended the issue of any measures to be carried by popular suffrage, or new laws to be enacted. It was the province of the censors to distribute the citizens in the different tribes. Now, when they formed new tribes from the inhabitants of the conquered countries, they composed these tribes chiefly of the ancient Roman citizens, and transported to Rome the principal men of the conquered nation, whom they ingrafted into the original urban, or rustic, tribes of the commonwealth. Thus two good purposes were at once served. The Roman citizens, who principally composed the new tribes, kept the provinces in order, and inspired them with an affection for the Roman government; while, on the other hand, the new citizens, dispersed among many of the ancient tribes, and constantly under the eye of Roman magistrates, could have little or no influence in the affairs of the commonwealth.

* See Livy, lib. ii. c. 23, where this incident is most eloquently related.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Carthage, a Phœnician Colony—Early History—Government—Wars—Early History of Sicily—Syracuse, Government—Dionysius the Elder—Dionysius the Younger—Dion—Timoleon—Agathocles—Character of the Carthaginians and Romans compared.

As we are now arrived at that period when Rome, mistress of Italy, began to extend her conquests, and aim at foreign dominion, it is necessary, in order to prepare the mind of the student of history, to follow with advantage the detail of the progress of her arms, that he should have some acquaintance with the history of Carthage, and of Sicily.

Carthage, according to the most probable accounts, was founded by a colony of Tyrians, about seventy years before the building of Rome. The colony had the same language, the same laws, the same customs, and exhibited the same national character with the parent state. The early Carthaginian history is extremely uncertain: but from the vigorous industry of that people who were its founders, and their great progress in the arts, we may suppose that the Carthaginians made a rapid advancement. From the time of the elder Cyrus, their marine was formidable. One of the most ancient naval engagements recorded in history, is that in which the Carthaginian fleet, in conjunction with that of the Etruscans, fought against the Phocians of Ionia, who were desirous of escaping the yoke of the Persian monarch.

The Carthaginians had by degrees extended their dominion along the whole African coast of the Mediterranean, from the confines of Egypt on the east, to the Pillars of Hercules, or the Straits of Gibraltar. Their capital, in the days of its splendor, that is, during the wars with the Romans, was one of the most magnificent and most populous cities in the universe. The number of its inhabitants is said to have amounted to 700,000; and it had under its sovereignty about three hundred towns along the Mediterranean coast.

We know nothing of the nature of the earliest government of the Carthaginians, that is, during the first four centuries from the foundation of their empire, and very little even of what it was in the latter periods preceding its dissolution. They are celebrated, however, by Aristotle,* as possessing one of the most perfect

* Aristotle, whose account of this republic is, on the whole, very obscure,

constitutions among the ancient republics. They had, like the Romans, two chief magistrates, called *suffetes*, who were chosen annually, and had powers, probably, much akin to those of the consuls. They had likewise an elective senate, which deliberated on the most important business of the state: but unanimity was required to give effect to their decrees; for if there was a difference of opinion, the matter was immediately remitted to the assembly of the people. They had a tribunal of one hundred and four judges, chosen from the senate, to whom the generals of their armies were responsible for their conduct; and it was not unusual, as we are told, for this tribunal to punish an unsuccessful general with death. All the powers of government seem to have resided in the *suffetes* and senate, if concurring in opinion; for it was only in case of difference, as already said, that the sentiments of the popular assembly were consulted. Aristotle has noted two circumstances, as defects in the constitution of this republic: the one, that it was lawful for the same individual to exercise different offices of state at the same time; the other, that the poor were excluded from holding all offices of importance in the commonwealth. But the former of these may be found expedient and even necessary in the best regulated governments, and the latter appears to be agreeable to the soundest policy; for in offices of high trust, poverty might often prove too powerful an excitement to a deviation from duty.

The first settlements of the Carthaginians were entirely in the way of commerce. They traded with the nations on the coast of Spain for gold, and maintaining a constant intercourse with Phœnicia, their parent state, and with the other nations on the coasts of the Mediterranean, they became the commercial agents between the eastern and western parts of Europe. Their naval expeditions were not confined to the Mediterranean. They passed the Straits of Gibraltar, and coasting along the African shore, formed settlements even as far as the 25th degree of north latitude, that is, three degrees south of the Canary Islands, anciently called *Insulæ Fortunatæ*. Hanno, by order of the Carthaginian senate, sailed upon a voyage of discovery along the African coast to the southward, and wrote himself a very curious account of his navigation; an extract from which, or rather a fragment of a Greek translation of which, is still remaining, entitled the *Periplus* of Hanno. It is a valuable remnant of antiquity, written in the style of a plain narrative, without ostentation or embellishment, and very much resembling the journal of a modern navigator. The facts which he relates have nothing of the mar-

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gives this strong proof of the excellence of the Carthaginian government, that from the origin of their state down to his own times, the age of Alexander, "its tranquillity had never been disturbed either by domestic sedition or the tyranny of its government."—Arist. de Repub. lib. ii. cap. 2.

vellous, and agree very much with the accounts given by the moderns of the same countries. He observed from his fleet, that in the daytime there was nothing to be seen upon the land, but all was stillness and silence; but in the night he heard the sound of various musical instruments, and saw a great number of fires lighted along the coast: and we know that such is the appearance of a great part of the western coast of Africa at this day: that the savages in the daytime retire into the woods to avoid the heat of the sun; that they light great fires in the night to disperse the beasts of prey; and that they are extremely fond of music and dancing.

The Carthaginians pursued their mercantile discoveries likewise to the north of the Straits: they carried on a trade with the ports of Gaul, and even with the southern coast of Britain, whence they drew tin, lead and copper. They had a settlement in the islands called *Cassiterides*, which are supposed to be the Scilly Islands, on the coast of Cornwall.

At the time of Hannibal a taste for Greek literature had prevailed at Carthage. That great man, as Cornelius Nepos informs us, composed several books in the Greek language.* He had for his preceptor in that language Sosilus, a Lacedæmonian. A Carthaginian, Silenus, is likewise mentioned by Cicero as a writer of history in Greek. Sallust, in his history of the Jugurthine war, mentions books written in the Carthaginian language,† which he had consulted in composing his history of that war. Further proof of Carthaginian learning may be found in the writings of the elder Pliny: and a specimen of the Carthaginian language is preserved in the Pœnulus of Plautus.‡

The Carthaginians, enriched by commerce and increasing in population, soon found their original territory too small for them, and began to aim at extending it by conquest. They armed successively against the Mauritanians, Numidians, and all the neighboring nations; but as the spirit of war was averse to the habits of an industrious and mercantile people, it was their constant practice to employ mercenary troops, which they levied not only from Africa, but from Spain, Italy, the Mediterranean Islands, from Gaul and even Greece. The first of the Carthaginian wars which authentic history records, is that with the Greek colonies of Sicily.

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* Atque hic tantus vir, tantisque bellis distractus, nonnihil temporis tribuit litteris. Namque aliquot ejus libri sunt Græco sermone confecti: in his ad Rhodios de Cn. Manlii Volsonis in Asia rebus gestis. . . . Hujus bella gesta multi memoriæ prodiderunt sed ex his duo, qui cum eo in castris fuerunt, simulque vixerunt, quamdiu fortuna passa est, Silenus et Sosilus Lacedæmonius. Atque hoc Sosilo Hannibal literarum Græcarum usus est doctore.—C. Nepos in vit. Hannib.

† Ex libris Punicis qui regis Hiempsalis dicebantur, interpretatum nobis est.—Sall. Bell. Jug. c. xx.

‡ Plaut. Pœn. Act v. sc. I.

They had certainly, however, long before this period, made settlements on that island. Darius, the son of Hystaspes, proposed an alliance with them against the Greeks, and they concluded that treaty with Xerxes, when he followed out the projects of his father. They engaged to attack the Greeks of Sicily, while he invaded the mother country.

The early periods of the History of Sicily are no less uncertain than those of Carthage. This country was termed *Trinacria*, from its triangular figure, and obtained afterwards the name of *Sicania*, from the *Sicāni*, who are said to have been originally a people of Spain. The Siculi, an Italian tribe, afterwards took possession of the greater part of the island; and from them it was named Sicilia. The Phœnicians are reported to have sent some colonies into this fertile island, before the time of the Trojan war. The Greeks, a considerable while after this period, began to form settlements upon the coasts, and drove the Sicani and the Sicilians into the interior of the country. These Greek colonies brought with them the spirit and manners of their native land; the love of independence, and some knowledge of the arts and sciences.* A colony of the Corinthians founded Syracuse, which became the most illustrious of the Grecian cities of Sicily: and from Syracuse arose afterwards Agrigentum, Acra, Camarina, Camarine, and several other flourishing towns.

What was the most ancient form of the Syracusan government, we are much at a loss to know. But on the authority of ancient authors, we are assured that it was for a considerable tract of time monarchical; and might long have continued so, had all its sovereigns inherited the eminent virtues and abilities of Gelon, its first monarch, who, though severe in his manners, was one of the best of princes; but his successors abusing their power, and exercising the most despotic tyranny, at last drove their subjects to the necessity of abolishing the regal government; and, as if the example had been contagious, the whole Greek cities of Sicily expelled their tyrannic governors, and entered into a general confederacy to secure their individual freedom and independence.

Sixty years after this period, an obscure man of the name of Dionysius, by great address and the most various abilities, had so ingratiated himself with the people of Syracuse, while in the capacity of one of their magistrates, that he gradually usurped the supreme authority. He was a very able general, and successfully withstood the attempts of the Carthaginians to make themselves masters of Sicily. By his army, these formidable invaders, who had obtained possession of a great part of the island, were almost

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* No country, of so narrow bounds, has in ancient times produced more learned men than Sicily. Æschylus, Diodorus Siculus, Empedocles, Gorgias, Euclid, Archimedes, Epicharmus, Theocritus, were all Sicilians by birth.

entirely extirpated. Dionysius supported his administration by military force, by extreme severity and the most rigid despotism; yet there were some features of his character which seemed to indicate a more generous nature. He was fond of literary pursuits, a liberal patron of learned men, and even himself a poet. He contended for the prize of poetry given at the feast of Bacchus, and obtained it; though, if we credit the story told of the poet Philoxenus, this must have been a very partial judgment. Philoxenus, it is said, being invited to dine with Dionysius, and to hear him recite some poetical composition, was the only one of the guests who took the liberty of censuring it; he was condemned to the mines; but being soon after set at liberty, and invited to hear another recitation, he held his peace when it came to his turn to give his opinion. "What," said Dionysius, "have you nothing to say on this occasion?" "Carry me back to the mines," said Philoxenus. Dionysius, we are told, was not displeased with the answer.

The character of this prince is, on the whole, ambiguous. It is not improbable that the hatred which the Greeks ever affected to bear to the name of tyrant, has made their historians blacken the character of Dionysius more than he deserved.* We read of the constant terror he was under of assassination; of his never venturing to harangue the people but from the top of a tower; of the dungeon he contrived for the imprisonment of state-criminals, constructed in the form of the cavity of the ear, which communicating with an aperture in his private apartment, he could distinctly hear any word that the prisoner uttered; of the horror he had of allowing himself to be shaved; and of his making his daughters singe off his beard with nut-shells. But how is all this consistent with the certain facts, of his commanding his armies in person; his overseeing the numerous artists employed in the public works; his familiar intercourse with men of science, his magnificent entertainments, and, at length, his dying of a debauch at a public festival? Great allowance must be made for the prejudices of those writers who have given us the character of Dionysius.

After the death of Dionysius the elder, the crown of Syracuse passed, without opposition, to Dionysius his son, an idle, weak, and dissolute prince, whom his father, to repress any premature schemes of ambition, had kept in profound ignorance. Along with the tyrannical disposition of his father, he had the same passion, or at least the same affectation of a taste, for literature. The

* Dionysius having sent his brother to the Olympic games to contend in his name for the prize of poetry, the Greeks, who detested his name, hissed the reciters off the stage, and tore his brother's rich pavilion to pieces. Lysias, the orator, made a speech on the occasion, in which he undertook to prove that it was an affront to all Greece, and an insult on their sacred solemnities, to allow the compositions of a wicked tyrant to be publicly rehearsed.—Plutarch Mor.

philosopher Plato had been invited to Syracuse, by Dionysius the elder, and had contracted an intimate friendship with Dion, the brother-in-law of Dionysius, of whom, in one of his epistles, he gives this high character, that he had never met with a young man on whom his philosophical principles had made so great an impression. But their effect on Dionysius himself was not so favorable; for, being offended with the freedom which the philosopher used in censuring whatever he disapproved in the maxims and government of the tyrant, the latter ordered him to be sold as a slave in the public market. His disciples paid the price of five minæ for their master, and sent him safe back to Greece. Dion, from an earnest desire of reforming the morals of his kinsman, the younger Dionysius, persuaded him to invite the philosopher once more to return to Sicily. Plato came, and virtue and learning seemed for awhile to reign at Syracuse; but their dominion was of short duration; for the corrupted courtiers of Dionysius prevailed on him to banish Dion, and Plato followed his favorite disciple.

The exile of Dion was aggravated by circumstances of the most flagrant injustice and oppression: his property was confiscated, and Areta, his wife, the sister of Dionysius, was, by that tyrant, compelled to enter into another marriage with a sycophant of his court. The more respectable part of the Syracusans were indignant at these outrages, which reflected dishonor on the state, and sought earnestly to rid themselves from their yoke. They held a secret correspondence with Dion, whom they prevailed on to aid them in their design of effecting a revolution. With the aid of foreign troops whom he levied in Greece, and supported by all the Syracusans who favored the cause of liberty, Dion compelled the tyrant to evacuate Syracuse, and seek refuge in Italy. But the austere manners of the virtuous Dion were not suited to a licentious and corrupted people. He lost the affections of his subjects; they forgot his services, and deposed and banished him: he was recalled, indeed, soon after, but to meet with a worse fate: for while he sought to appease the seditions excited by the partisans of Dionysius, he was assassinated by an infamous Athenian, on whom he had bestowed his chief confidence.

Aided by the distractions of Syracuse, consequent on the death of Dion, Dionysius regained the throne, ten years after his expulsion: but his tyrannical disposition inflamed, not mitigated by his misfortunes, soon became so intolerable, that he was expelled a second time, and banished to Corinth; he there ended his days in poverty and obscurity. It is said, that the tyranny of his nature found a congenial gratification in exercising the employment of a schoolmaster.

This last revolution had been effected by the aid of Timoleon, a noble Corinthian, whom his countrymen deputed to restore the liberties of their ancient colony. Timoleon had distinguished himself by an ardent passion for republican freedom, which had

even hurried him into the commission of a shocking crime. Unable to dissuade his brother, Timophanes, from a design of usurping the sovereignty of his native state, he caused two of his friends to assassinate him, in his own presence. This deed, though applauded by his fellow citizens, was attended by such severe remorse, that he threw up all public employment, and wandered in melancholy dejection for a period of twenty years. He was now, however, summoned to take the command of the expedition to Sicily, and his favorite passion prompted him to obey the summons.

The Carthaginians having some settlements in Sicily, had long earnestly looked to the acquisition of the whole island, and at this time, under the pretext of aiding the Syracusans in the design of dethroning their tyrant, had landed a large force, and seized and garrisoned several of the Sicilian towns. Dionysius, reduced to extremity between the Carthaginian army on the one side, and the troops of Timoleon on the other, chose to enter into a capitulation with the latter, and agreed to abandon his throne, and purchase his life by a voluntary banishment into Greece. Timoleon sent him in a single galley to Corinth. Having delivered Syracuse from her tyrant, he now turned his arms against the Carthaginians, whom he defeated in several battles, and compelled to yield up all their new acquisitions, confining themselves within the limits of their ancient possessions.

Having thus honorably fulfilled the original object of his mission, in giving peace and liberty to the Syracusans, Timoleon found his aid and alliance eagerly courted by the other republics of Sicily, who desired to follow the example of Syracuse in expelling their domestic tyrants, and establishing a free constitution. This purpose successfully accomplished, Timoleon now applied himself to the means of repairing the wasted population of the Syracusan territory, by recalling all those citizens whom the tyranny of the late government had compelled to abandon their country, and by prompting new settlers to resort thither by every encouragement which good policy could suggest. This truly great man no sooner brought about a regular and stable administration of government, than he gave an illustrious proof how disinterested had been the motives of his conduct, by resigning all power, and returning to the condition of a private citizen. As such he passed the remainder of his days, highly honored and beloved by that people who owed to his virtues their liberty and their happiness.

It is not difficult to account for those revolutions to which we have observed the state of Syracuse so much exposed. This city had acquired great wealth by commerce. The overgrown fortunes of individuals put it in their power not only to stir up factions and cabals, but even to raise armies. The state likewise was accustomed to employ only foreign troops, and thus afforded a tempting opportunity to strangers to aim at attaining power and influence in the republic. Had there been in Sicily any other

state so formidable as to balance the power of Syracuse, we should then have seen in that country nearly the same scenes that we have observed in Greece. We should have seen the inferior states pass from the alliance of the one to that of the other; associations constantly formed to maintain a balance of power, and at the same time a cordial union of the whole against a foreign enemy. But as the power of Syracuse was not kept down by any formidable rival in Sicily, this circumstance obliged the inferior states who wished to avoid her yoke to seek aid from abroad, and thus Sicily was laid open to the Carthaginians and to the Greeks.

The Syracusans did not long enjoy the liberty and peace to which they had been restored by Timoleon. Agathocles, a man who had risen from a low condition to the first military honors, and the command of their fleets and armies, took advantage of that power to render himself master of the city. Besieged by the Carthaginians in Syracuse, he carried the war into Africa, ravaged the country to the gates of Carthage, and defeated their army in a signal engagement, which had very near proved fatal to their empire. He suffered, however, a signal reverse of fortune. During his absence in Africa, the Sicilian states, oppressed by Syracuse, formed a league in defence of their liberties. Agathocles having reimbarked a part of his troops, with the design of chastising this revolt, the Carthaginians in the meantime reduced the remainder of the Syracusan army to such extremity, that even the return of their leader was insufficient to retrieve their losses. Regarding their situation as desperate, Agathocles, with the meanest treachery, abandoned his army in the night, and escaped back to Sicily in a single vessel, leaving his two sons to the mercy of the Carthaginians, who put them both to death. His vengeance now found an object in reducing the Sicilian states, whose revolt had been the immediate cause of his disasters; but while actively engaged in this purpose, his life was shortened by poison.

The Carthaginians, still intent on the acquisition of Sicily, now invested Syracuse with an immense fleet and an army of 50,000 men. Unable effectually with their own power to resist this overwhelming force, the Syracusans solicited aid from Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, who, as we have before seen, had at this time abandoned all hope of achieving the conquest of Italy. He seized this occasion as an honorable pretext for withdrawing his troops from that country. The Syracusans received him with open arms, and put him in possession of their city, their fleet, and the public treasure. Pyrrhus, with this combination of force, was for some time eminently successful; but on a change, as we have before related, this prince thought it his wisest course to drop his schemes of ambition, and return to Epirus. On quitting Sicily, he is said to have exclaimed, "What a beautiful field of battle do we leave for the Romans and Carthaginians!" His prediction was speedily fulfilled, for immediately after began the first Punic war.

The character of the Carthaginians, and that of the Romans, whom we shall now see engaged in war for a long series of years, formed a very remarkable contrast to each other. As this difference of character may, perhaps, be accounted for on one single principle, I shall endeavor very shortly to unfold that principle, in a few observations on the effects of a commercial life upon the genius, manners, and laws of a nation.

One most natural effect of the commercial spirit is a selfish and interested turn of mind; a habit of measuring every thing by the standard of profit and loss, and a predominant idea that wealth is the main constituent both of public and private happiness. The contrast of character, in this respect, between the Romans and Carthaginians, has been finely remarked by Polybius. "In all things," says that judicious writer, "which regard the acquisition of wealth, the manners and customs of the Romans are infinitely preferable to those of the Carthaginians. This latter people esteemed nothing to be disgraceful that was connected with gain. Among them, money is openly employed to purchase the dignities and offices of the state: but all such proceedings are capital crimes at Rome." I am afraid that a contrast, so honorable to the Romans, could only have been made with justice in the early periods of the republic; since we know that without an increase of commerce, to which might be attributed the consequent increase of corruption and venality, those vices had attained to as great a height towards the end of the republic at Rome, as ever they had done at Carthage. But wealth acquired by plunder, rapine, and peculation, is yet more corruptive of the manners of a people, than riches acquired by merchandise.

Another effect of the prevalence of the commercial spirit, is to depress the military character of a people, and to render them indisposed to warlike enterprises. The advancement of trade cannot take place in any high degree, unless a nation is at peace with its neighbors, and enjoys domestic security. The prospect of that precarious gain which arises from warfare, will not weigh against the certain advantages which commerce derives from a state of peace. The art of war will not, therefore, flourish as a profession among a commercial people, and the practice of it will generally be intrusted to mercenary troops. Military rank will be in low esteem, because, when purchased, it ceases in a great degree to be honorable. Thus the Carthaginians, though certainly not inferior by nature to the Romans in courage and military prowess, were become so from habit and education. The armies of the empire were not composed of its native subjects; they were mercenaries, and, therefore, had no natural affection for that soil which they were called to defend, or that people who were nothing more than their paymasters. Hence the signal inferiority of their armies to the Romans, unless when commanded by Carthaginian generals of high, natural, military genius, who could bring

their force into action as a great machine directed by one simple power.

Public spirit and a high tone of national virtue are rarely to be found in states whose principal object is commerce. Patriotism cannot flourish, where the spirit of gain predominates. Each individual, feeling interest separate from, and often incompatible with that of the state, it is not surprising that what regards only the good of the community should have but small influence; and even that private advantage, and the enrichment of individuals, should be the mainspring of public measures.

But this, it may be said, is the dark side of the picture. Let us, therefore, attend to those beneficial consequences, which may naturally be attributed to the prevalence of the commercial spirit in a nation.

And of these, what immediately strikes us, as the most obvious, is the general diffusion of industry. Among a commercial people, the faculties both of mind and body are of necessity almost continually employed. Invention is ever on the stretch to discover new sources of gain; and the enterprising spirit of the more opulent furnishes constant occupation to the mechanic, the manufacturer, and the laborer.

Inseparably connected with the general diffusion of industry, is a spirit of frugality. Riches have their full value when purchased by the labor either of the mind or body, and what costs dear will not be frivolously expended. Justin has remarked the parsimony as well as the industry of the Tyrians. Strabo and Cicero give the same character of the people of Marseilles, and Diodorus Siculus of the Carthaginians. In modern times we observe the association of the same qualities among the Dutch and the Chinese.

Another necessary consequence of the prevalence of commerce, is a regularity and strictness of the national police, a severity of the laws with respect to mutual contracts and obligations, and a consequent security in the transactions of individuals with each other.* I know not whether a certain degree of refinement in manners, at least to the length of general courtesy and affability both to those of the same nation and to foreigners, be not a consequence of the spirit of trade; a refinement of manners, however, very different from that of a luxurious people, where the laws of behavior arise chiefly from motives of ease and pleasure, or are dictated by gallantry or a high point of honor.

Science is likewise in many respects greatly indebted to commerce. Thus astronomy, navigation, general mathematics, me-

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* When the Roman writers inveigh against the *Punica fides*, the censure applies to their character in war; and even in that respect it may well be questioned whether the Roman character stood in any higher degree of estimation.

chanics, and indeed all sciences subservient to practical utility, are greatly advanced by it, and derive a vast encouragement from the demands which it occasions for the productions of the useful arts. With regard to literature there is greater doubt. The labor of the head in those productions which tend only to amusement, or at least a refinement of the intellectual powers, without any obvious consequence as to the practical business of worldly life, will not, it is probable, meet with much encouragement among a people whose views extend no farther than the substantial acquisitions of wealth and property.

Such are the principal effects of the spirit of commerce on the character and manners of a nation; and such accordingly we find to constitute the principal features of the Carthaginian character opposed to the Roman.

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## CHAPTER IX.

First Punic War—First Naval Victory of the Romans—Invasion of Africa—Regulus—Termination of the War—Second Punic War—Hannibal passes the Alps—His victories in Italy—Battle of Cannæ—Hannibal winters in Capua—Siege of Syracuse—Death of Archimedes—Battle of Zama—and end of Second Punic War—Defeat of Philip II. of Macedon—of Antiochus, king of Syria, by the Consul Acceptation of Scipio Asiaticus—His character—Scipio Asiaticus—War with Perseus and reduction of Macedonia—Third Punic War, and destruction of Carthage.

It has been justly remarked that the Romans, although an ambitious people, did not begin to form plans of extensive conquest, till they had sufficient strength to undertake them with advantage. The triumph which their arms had obtained over Pyrrhus, the most able and the most experienced general of his time, seemed to give them an assurance of success in any military enterprise in which they should engage.

The First Punic war took its rise from the following cause. The Mamertines, a people of Campania, had taken possession of Messina, one of the Sicilian towns allied to Syracuse. Hiero, king of Syracuse, had marched against these invaders, who, conscious that they were unable to withstand so powerful an antagonist, applied for aid, first to the Carthaginians, and afterwards, from rational fear of being enslaved by this power, to the Romans. Although this was a very unjustifiable quarrel, the Romans made no scruple

to take a part; and they sent a large army, which engaged and defeated the united forces of the Syracusans and Carthaginians. The king of Syracuse having now experienced to his cost the power of the Roman arms, was glad to court their alliance; flattering himself, by this means, with the prospect of absolutely expelling from Sicily the Carthaginians, who had long entertained the design of annexing this island to their empire, and had made considerable progress in that design.

By the joint forces of the Romans and Syracusans, Agrigentum, one of the principal cities then possessed by the Carthaginians, was taken, after a long siege. The Romans, encouraged by this success, and conscious of the great advantage which the enemy derived from their marine, began to think of equipping a fleet to cope with them at sea, as well as on land. A Carthaginian galley, stranded on the coast of Italy, is said to have served them as a model; and, by a wonderful effort of industry, they equipped in a few weeks a hundred similar to it, with five banks of oars—and twenty of a smaller size with three banks. The Consul Duilius made an improvement on these ships of war, by the invention of a machine called *Corvus*, —a sort of crane, which, falling down and fastening upon the ships of the enemy, brought them to a close engagement, and served at the same time as a bridge or gangway for boarding them. All new inventions are usually successful at first, from the surprise which they occasion. The Roman fleet gained a most complete victory over that of the Carthaginians. A vast number of their ships were destroyed, above 7,000 men killed, and an equal number made prisoners.*

For a few years the success of the Romans was uninterrupted. They took from the Carthaginians the islands of Corsica and Sardinia; and in the naval engagement at Ecnomus, having captured sixty of the enemy's ships, they now thought themselves in a situation to attempt the invasion of Africa.

The consul Attilius Regulus had the command of that expedition. The history of this illustrious man, particularly the latter part of it, is, by some modern writers, suspected of being fabulous; and indeed they have advanced some very plausible arguments against the belief of its authenticity: yet it is found in the best of the Roman writers, and is in itself so beautiful, that we cannot hastily resolve to refuse it credit. Regulus, after several successful engagements in Africa, had advanced even to the gates of Carthage; and such was the general consternation, that the city proposed to capitulate. It had been glorious for Regulus thus to have termin-

* This naval engagement was fought on the coast of Sicily, near Mylæ, now Milazzo. A monument of the victory was erected at Rome, which subsists to this day—the *columna rostrata*, dug up about 200 years ago, and now standing in the Capitol.

ated the war by an advantageous and honorable peace; but, blinded by success, the terms he insisted on were so severe, that, even situated as they were, the Carthaginians rejected them. In the meantime, a large body of Greek troops arrived to their assistance. This changed the fortune of the war; the Carthaginians assumed new courage, and with an army largely reinforced, attacking the Romans, they gained an important victory, and made Regulus their prisoner.

The Romans, undismayed by this great misfortune, prosecuted the war with fresh vigor. Metellus, in Sicily, was carrying every thing before him. He defeated Asdrubal, the Carthaginian general in a signal engagement near Panormus; and Carthage, dispirited by her losses, began seriously to wish for peace. Ambassadors for that purpose were dispatched to Rome; and Regulus was sent along with them, as it was not doubted that the negotiation, seconded by the endeavors of this general, whom his country most deservedly respected, would be easily terminated. They exacted at the same time from him an oath—that he would return to Carthage, in case there should neither be peace nor an exchange of prisoners. To the surprise of all, this great and generous man used his utmost endeavors to dissuade his countrymen from agreeing to a peace; a proposition which he represented as proceeding solely from the weakness of the enemy, whom, by continuing the war, they would compel to any submission. But still farther, he even dissuaded his countrymen from consenting to an exchange of prisoners; a measure which he endeavored to convince them must be to their disadvantage, from this circumstance, that they had in their hands many of the best officers of the enemy, whom they would be obliged to exchange against private men. His arguments prevailed, and the negotiation was broken off.

Of the conduct of Regulus, and of the nature of the obligation which bound him, there have been various opinions, both among the ancients and moderns. Cicero argues the matter at great length in the third book of his Offices.* He applauds the conduct of Regulus, not only in the strict observance of his oath, but in his dissuasive against the exchange of prisoners. On the other hand, Sir Walter Raleigh, in his excellent History of the World, has distinguished between these two actions. He applauds the conduct of Regulus in strictly maintaining the obligation of his oath, and in opposing the treaty of peace with the enemy; but his dissuading his countrymen from agreeing to an exchange of prisoners, he censures as a piece of ostentatious stoicism, and even inhumanity, which no good reason of state could justify. And this we must think a sound opinion. The latter part of the conduct of this illustrious man must on all hands meet with ad-

* Cic. de Offic. l. iii. c. xxvi. et seq.

miration. The Pontifex Maximus, on being consulted on the validity of the oath he had sworn to return to Carthage, gave it as his opinion that, it having been extorted by the necessity of his situation, he was under no obligation to observe it. But the noble soul of Regulus could not admit of such evasion. Disregarding the entreaties of his friends, the tears of his wife and children, the urgent remonstrance of the senate and of the whole Roman people, this generous and heroic man resolved that the terror of consequences, how dreadful soever, should not persuade him to a violation of his honor.* "I am not ignorant," said he, "that death and the severest tortures are preparing for me: but what are these to the stain of an infamous action, the reproach of a guilty mind? I have sworn to return to Carthage: it is therefore my duty to go. Let the gods direct the consequence as to their wisdom shall seem best." To Carthage accordingly he returned, where, as he had foreseen, he suffered a cruel and ignominious death.†

The war in the meantime continued. Lilybæum, one of the strongest places belonging to the Carthaginians in Sicily, after a siege of many years, by the Romans, with the aid of the Syracusans, and the most signal efforts on both sides of courage, skill, and perseverance, was taken, in the tenth year, by blockade. After some alternate successes at sea, the Romans were victorious in two naval engagements; in the last of which, the Consul Lu-

* This scene is beautifully described by Horace, Od. iii. 5, 49.

† Most of the ancient writers concur in the assertion that Regulus was put to death in a very barbarous manner by the Carthaginians. The authors of the Ancient Universal History relate as the most common opinion, that he was first exposed to a burning sun, with his eyelids cut off, and afterwards shut up in a cask, stuck around with sharp nails, in which he was suffered to die of hunger and want of sleep.—Anc. Un. Hist., vol. xii. p. 191. It must, however, be owned, that great doubt hangs over all the accounts that are given of the manner of Regulus. Polybius, who is extremely minute in every thing relative to the history of this illustrious man, is entirely silent as to his fate; which, had it been such as is commonly related, he could never have omitted to mention. He assures us, in the first book of his History, that he has been most particular in his account of Regulus, that others may derive improvement from his example in not trusting too much to a course of prosperous fortune. As, therefore, the calamitous death of Regulus was the strongest exemplification of this moral lesson, it is impossible to believe that he would have studiously avoided the mention of the above particulars, if they had been true.

But there is in reality a positive testimony against the truth of those atrocious circumstances above related. Among various fragments of ancient authors, collected by the Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus, is a passage from Diodorus Siculus, in which it is asserted that the death of Regulus was owing to neglect; probably the carelessness of his keepers in omitting to supply him with food. The author adds, that the widow of Regulus instigated her sons, in revenge of their father's death, to wreak their resentment against two of the Carthaginian prisoners who had fallen into their hands, one of whom they actually starved to death. The other was fortunate enough to convey intelligence to the Roman magistrate of his comrade's death and his own intended fate, in consequence of which the Attilii very narrowly escaped a capital punishment. See Toland's Works, vol. ii. p. 42, where there is a translation of the fragment of Diodorus, and a proof of its authenticity.

tatius defeated Hamilcar Barca, the father of the great Hannibal, and compelled the Carthaginians to sue for peace, which was not granted them but on the hardest conditions. These were, that they should abandon all their possessions in Sicily; that, in the space of twenty years, they should pay to the Romans 2,200 talents of silver,—about 325,480*l* sterling, that they should restore, without ransom, all their prisoners; and lastly, that they should not make war against Hiero, the king of Syracuse, or any of his allies. The Roman people refused to ratify this treaty, unless on the further conditions, that they should have an additional thousand talents for the expenses of the war; that the whole sum should be paid in ten years instead of twenty; and that the Carthaginians should yield up all the small islands which they possessed upon the coast of Italy. Sicily was declared a Roman province, with the exception of the kingdom of Syracuse. A prætor and quæstor were sent thither yearly, the former as a civil judge, the latter to collect the revenues.

Thus, the Romans, after a war of twenty-four years, begun under every disadvantage, destitute of finances, totally unprovided with a fleet, and, of course, ignorant of navigation, were, at length, able to prescribe the most humiliating terms to Carthage, the first maritime power in the world.

At the end of the First Punic war, the temple of Janus was shut —an event which had not happened since the reign of Numa, that is, near 500 years. In a few years it was again opened, and never shut till the reign of Augustus.

The treaty with the Carthaginians was of no long duration. It was of too humbling a nature to the pride of this mighty power, to subsist longer than absolute necessity compelled:—an useful lesson of moderation to a victorious people. No sooner had a little time allowed the vanquished state to repair her losses, than the war broke out again, with redoubled animosity. The Carthaginians began hostilities by the siege of Saguntum, a city of Spain, then in alliance with the Romans. The siege was conducted by Hannibal, then a very young man, but who, from his infancy, had been inured to arms, and had all the qualities of a great general. His character has been drawn by Livy with the pencil of a master:—"Hannibal, being sent into Spain, on his arrival drew the eyes of the whole army upon him. The old soldiers believed that Hamilcar was again restored to life, and that they saw once more the same look of decision, the same fire of the eye, the very countenance and lineaments of their leader. Speedily, there was no need of such recollections of the father to endear to them the son. None ever showed a happier aptitude of disposition, whether in obeying or commanding; so that it was impossible to say whether he was most prized by the general or by the army. Nor, in whatever service of difficulty or of danger, would Asdrubal appoint any other to the command, or the troops engage under any other with

equal confidence and courage. His boldness in undertaking a perilous enterprise was equalled by his prudence in conducting it. His strength, neither of body nor mind, was ever seen to yield to the severest labor. Insensible alike to heat or cold, his food and drink were limited to the necessities of nature, never indulged to gratification. All hours of the day or night were to him alike, whether for duty or repose; what could be spared from the former was given to the latter; no appliances were wanted,—no soft couch, or silent retirement. Often was he seen, amidst the bustle of a military post, snatching a brief repose on the bare ground, his cloak his only covering. He affected no superiority of dress: valuing himself only on his arms and on his horses: himself the hardiest foot-soldier, and the most gallant horseman, the first to rush into combat, the last to quit the field. Yet were these high qualities counteracted by enormous vices, by the most inhuman cruelty, by worse than Punic perfidy, by the utter disregard of truth and of every thing sacred—owning no fear of Heaven, and regardless alike of promises and oaths."

Saguntum was taken by Hannibal after a siege of seven months, in which the inhabitants had endured the utmost miseries attendant on war. Faithful to their alliance with the Romans, this brave people defended themselves to the last extremity; and when at length convinced that their resistance was ineffectual, they set fire to the city, and the whole of them either perished in the flames, or were cut to pieces by the Carthaginians.

The military strength of the Romans was, at this time, very considerable. They had six legions in the field, amounting to 24,000 foot and 18,000 horse: they had, besides, from the auxiliary states of Italy, an army of 45,000 men; and their marine consisted of 240 ships of war.

The forces of the Carthaginians were commanded in chief by Hannibal; and this intrepid man now formed the daring project of carrying the war at once into the heart of Italy. He procured the minutest information as to every difficulty he would have to encounter, and took the most judicious care to provide against all obstacles. He gained, by kindness and by presents, a number of the Gauls to his interest, and thus smoothed his way through a country hostilely disposed, but not daring to attempt an effectual opposition. The passage of the Ebro, and the defiles of the Pyrenees, were small obstacles to those his resolution and intrepidity surmounted. On the first intelligence of the march of the Carthaginians, Publius Scipio, the consul, had taken the field with a large army, and hoped by rapid marches to arrest him in the first part of his progress, and to make the country of the Transalpine Gauls the theatre of the war; but Hannibal had got the start of him, and had already passed the Rhone in the face of an opposing army. He took his way along the eastern banks of that river to Lyons, and thence to one of the chief passes of the Alps—

not improbably that which is now known by the route of the Great St. Bernard. On proceeding to ascend the mountains, he found the country in some parts buried in snow, and at every defile defended by large troops of mountaineers. He overcame, by astonishing perseverance, every difficulty, and, at length, in the space of fifteen days, penetrated into that country which he had promised to his troops as the end and the reward of their labors. The time occupied in the whole of this march was five months and a half. His army, on leaving Carthage, amounted to 50,000 foot and 20,000 horse; but of these, on arriving in Italy, there remained only 20,000 foot and 6,000 horse. This expedition, of which Polybius and Livy have each given a detailed narration (differing in a few minute particulars), is deservedly reckoned one of the most remarkable exploits of antiquity.*

In the first battle with the Carthaginians in Italy, the Romans were defeated. The consul Scipio was wounded, and must have fallen into the hands of the enemy, but for the bravery of his son, the younger Scipio, then a youth of fifteen years of age, afterwards known by the glorious surname of Africanus. The Romans lost another battle near the river Trebia in the neighborhood of Placentia. They received a still more signal overthrow near the lake Thrasymenus, where the consul Flaminius was killed, and his army cut to pieces. The Roman historians themselves allow that Hannibal, amidst these successes, behaved with a moderation which added lustre to his victories. If his clemency was affected, his prudence at least, was admirable. The prisoners belonging to the allied states he dismissed without ransom, and endeavored to make them regard him as their deliverer from the oppression they suffered under the yoke of the Romans.

A misunderstanding that prevailed between the two new consuls, Varro and Emilius, was the immediate cause of that fatal defeat which the Romans sustained at Cannæ in Apulia, and which brought the Republic to the very brink of destruction. The consuls took the chief command alternately, each for a day; an unwise arrangement, which demanded the most perfect consonance of designs and of tempers. It was the turn of Varro, who, eager to signalize himself, was imprudent enough to attack the army of Hannibal, then admirably posted, and which had every advantage both of disposition and situation. The manœuvres of the Carthaginian general in the battle of Cannæ showed the most profound knowledge in the military art. I shall not here enter into a particular detail of them; but when I come to treat of the system of war among the ancients, I shall select as an example this great battle, and shall endeavor to give some idea of that very simple

* The route of Hannibal across the Alps is not described by the ancient writers with such accuracy as to give any certainty of its precise direction.

and admirable manœuvre planned by Hannibal in the heat of the engagement, to which the Carthaginians owed their success. The Roman army was entirely cut to pieces. Forty thousand were left dead upon the field of battle, among whom was the consul Emilius, and almost the whole body of the Roman knights. Varro, the other consul, followed by a few horse, fled precipitately to Venusia.

The Romans, amidst the consternation from so great a disaster, displayed a magnanimity truly heroic. The senate, on the first report of the fate of their army, ordered the gates of the city to be shut, lest the exaggerated intelligence of those who fled from the fight should add to the general alarm. The women were forbid to stir out of their houses, lest their cries and lamentations should dispirit those who had their country to defend; and the senators exerted themselves in every quarter to dispel the fears of the people.

Varro, from the wreck of the army, was able to collect 10,000 men; with these he repaired to Rome to defend the city, in case Hannibal, as was expected, should immediately attack it. This measure was undoubtedly his wisest policy, and he was strongly urged to it by Maherbal, one of his ablest officers. It appeared, however, to Hannibal, a doubtful enterprise: and while he deliberated, the opportunity was lost. Varro, whose temerity was the cause of this great disaster, on approaching Rome with the shattered remains of the army whom he had with much pains collected, was met by the senate and received their solemn thanks, *because he had not despaired of the republic.**

The effect of this spirited conduct was wonderful. The citizens thronged to carry their money to the public treasury. All above the age of seventeen, of whatever rank, enrolled themselves, and formed an army of four legions and 10,000 horse. Eight thousand of the slaves voluntarily offered their services, and with the consent of their masters were embodied and armed. The allied states likewise furnished troops in proportion to their abilities.

The success of Hannibal was variously judged of at Carthage. The most sanguine, and the most short-sighted, concluded that Rome was now annihilated, *et quod actum erat de republica Romana*. The wiser part reasoned far otherwise. They had heard of the conduct of the city subsequent to that great disaster, and

* Varro, however unfortunate in this affair, and justly censurable for his temerity, was both a brave and a modest man. His countrymen were so sensible of his virtues and abilities, that they proposed in this emergency to create him dictator; but he refused that high situation. "Conflixit rempublicam Terentius Varro, Cannensis pugnæ temerario ingressu; idem delatam sibi ab universo senatu et populo dictaturam recipere non sustinendo, pudore culpam maximæ cladis redemit, efficitque ut clades deorum iræ, modestia ipsius moribus imputaretur."—Valer. Max. lib. iv. c. 5.

they judged that while that spirit existed, there was much yet which remained for them to conquer. But even the most sagacious could not have foreseen that Hannibal was to ruin himself by his own imprudence. Capua, the metropolis of Campania, had opened her gates to the victor: the winter furnished a pretext to his troops to desire some respite from their fatigues; and he yielded to the blandishments of ease, and to the seduction of luxury. While his army indulged in all the variety of pleasures, they believed they had now attained the end and the reward of their toils; daily desertions weakened their numbers: and the Romans soon recovered the superiority they had lost.

The proconsul Sempronius Gracchus, at the head of an army composed chiefly of slaves, defeated 18,000 Carthaginians at Beneventum. With permission of the senate, he had promised all of them their liberty if they proved victorious, and this prospect gave them the courage of heroes. Philip II., king of Macedon, having made an alliance with Hannibal, landed in Italy, and laid siege to Apollonia, but being surprised in his camp by the pro-prætor Lævinus, and utterly defeated, with difficulty secured his retreat to his own dominions.

The republic owed much to the military skill and prudence of the consul Fabius, justly surnamed Maximus, who found the true secret of weakening the Carthaginians and wearing out the spirits of their leaders, by avoiding a general engagement. An army at a distance from the source of its supplies, and in a hostile country, must act with unremitting vigor — or perish. The Syracusans having broken their alliance with Rome, and taken part with the Carthaginians, Marcellus, who, previous to the disaster of Cannæ, had defeated Hannibal before Nola, in Campania, being at this time pro-consul in Sicily, formed the design of besieging Syracuse. This, however, was found a more difficult enterprise than had been expected. The genius of a single man was found sufficient to withstand for a great length of time the utmost efforts of an enemy by sea and land. This extraordinary man was Archimedes. It is pity that the ancient authors who have minutely detailed the prodigious effects of those machines which he constructed, and so successfully employed in this remarkable siege, have given accounts so obscure and imperfect of their construction. The city was twenty-two miles in compass, and was completely defended at every point, both on the quarter of the land and sea. The Roman fleet consisted of sixty galleys of five banks of oars, and an immense number of smaller vessels. These were manned with archers, slingers, and engineers, who worked the *balistæ* and *catapulta* erected on their decks. Marcellus caused eight galleys to be joined together laterally by iron chains, and on their surface, as a foundation, an immense tower was erected, whose height overtopped the walls of the city. This huge machine, which Marcellus called his *Sambuca*, or Dulcimer, was slowly advancing,

rowed by a great number of men, when Archimedes discharged from one of his engines a stone of 1250 pounds' weight, then a second, and immediately afterwards a third, with a direction so sure as to batter the galleys and the tower to pieces in a few minutes. An immense artillery of darts, stones, burning torches, and every material of annoyance, was incessantly launched upon the besiegers from every quarter of the walls; while the machines from which they issued were altogether beyond their reach and even out of their sight. It was of no avail whether they made their attack from a distance or close to the walls. If within the shot of a bow, the engines of Archimedes assailed the galleys with stones of such weight as entirely to demolish them; if they approached the walls, they were seized by cranes and grappling irons, suspended in the air, and suddenly let fall with a force that sunk them. Taking advantage of a meridian sun, and concentrating the rays by a combination of polished metal, this wonderful engineer burnt the vessels of the enemy at a furlong's distance—* thus, in the words of an old writer, making even the fire of heaven obedient to his commands.† Such, says Plutarch, became at length the terror of the Roman soldiers at this almost supernatural warfare, that if any man saw the smallest piece of cord or wood making its appearance above the walls, he instantly took to flight, crying out to his companions that they were to be overwhelmed in a moment by some tremendous power.

But the perseverance of the Romans prevailed at length over the valor of the Syracusans and the genius of Archimedes. In the third year of the siege the city was carried by surprise. Marcellus took advantage of a great festival which the Syracusans celebrated in honor of Diana, and in the dead of night, while the sentinels were sunk in sleep after a deep debauch, scaling the walls at the same moment in several different quarters, the Romans were in possession of a great part of the town before the Syracusans were aware of their danger. Marcellus wished to save this great and splendid city from destruction, and sent proposals to the garrison of the citadel for a surrender on terms sufficiently moderate and humane. But these were not immediately embraced, as

* Some of the moderns have questioned the authenticity of the accounts given by ancient writers of the wonderful machines of Archimedes, and particularly of that apparatus of mirrors by which it is said he burnt the enemy's ships (see Descartes, Dioptric Disc. viii., Fontenelle, Gravies, &c.); but the more general opinion of men of science is in favor of their credibility. M. de Buffon constructed a burning glass composed of 168 plain mirrors, which set fire to wood at the distance of 200 feet, and melted lead at the distance of 120. Leibnitz did justice to this great genius among the ancients when he said "Qui Archimedem intellegit, recentiorum summorum virorum inventa parcius mirabitur;" and Dr. Wallis, speaking of Archimedes, terms him, "Virum stupendæ sagacitatis, qui prima fundamenta posuit inventionum fere omnium, de quibus promovendis ætas nostra gloriatur." See Dutens's Inquiry into the Discoveries of the Moderns, part ii. ch. 10. 12.

† Eustath. ad. Iliad. E.

the garrison expressed a relief; and the Roman general, apprehensive of that issue, was reluctantly compelled to use the rights of a conqueror, and abandoned the city to the plunder of the soldiery. Still, however, his clemency was conspicuous, for he left the gates open for the escape of all who chose to save their lives by flight. It had been happy if Archimedes had availed himself of this permission; but the philosopher was busy in his closet with a geometrical demonstration, when a soldier, plundering his house, killed him on the spot. Marcellus erected a monument to his memory, and took a humane and generous charge of all his kindred.

The kingdom of Syracuse was now added to the Roman province in Sicily, which already comprehended the greater part of that island.

While the war in Italy against the troops of Hannibal was in the meantime successfully spun out to their destruction, by the great Fabius, the younger Scipio, who had succeeded his father as pro-consul in Spain, accomplished the reduction of that peninsula. The taking of Carthagena (Cartago nova) was a fatal blow to the enemy. It was the most opulent of the foreign ports, and the Romans found, besides great treasures, an immense magazine of military stores, which had been lodged there as in a depot for the conquest of Italy.

Meantime Asdrubal had passed the Alps, with a powerful army, to the assistance of his brother Hannibal. But the consul Claudius Nero, coming upon him by surprise in a disadvantageous situation, into which he had been led by the treachery of his guides, engaged and entirely defeated him. Asdrubal was killed in battle, and Claudius, marching to meet Hannibal, gave him the first intelligence of the defeat by throwing his brother's head into his camp. This Carthaginian officer, though thus unfortunate, had a very high character as a general. Had Asdrubal been successful in this engagement, and effected a junction with his brother, it is extremely probable that every thing must have given way before them in Italy. But the defeat of that great army and the death of their leader, threw a gloom of despondency on all the prospects of Hannibal, and gave new life and courage to the Romans.

Scipio, triumphant in Spain, now passed into Africa, and carried havoc and devastation even to the gates of Carthage. Alarmed for the fate of their empire, the Carthaginians recalled Hannibal from Italy, where of late he had made no progress. The battle of Zama, in Africa, decided the fate of the war. Twenty thousand Carthaginians were slain in the field, and an equal number taken prisoners. The loss of the Romans did not exceed two thousand. Hannibal himself with difficulty escaped from the field, and arriving at Carthage, represented affairs in so desperate a point of view, that it was immediately resolved to sue for peace. It was granted by Scipio on these conditions—that the Carthaginians

should abandon Spain and Sicily, together with all the islands lying between Italy and Africa; that they should make restitution of all prisoners and deserters, give up all their ships, except ten galleys, and pay within the term of fifty years, ten thousand talents; and, lastly, that they should undertake no war without the consent of the Romans. Such was the conclusion of the Second Punic war, ended thus gloriously for Rome, and most honorably for Publius Scipio, to whom his country decreed a splendid triumph, distinguishing him ever afterwards by the surname of Africanus.

Every thing now concurred to swell the pride of the Romans and to extend their power. A vast increase of wealth had flowed into Rome from the late conquests. Their recent continued victories, and the plunder they derived from them, inflamed their appetite for fresh acquisitions. It was no longer that petty nation occupying a part of Italy whom we have seen for centuries waging an insignificant war with the tribes which surrounded them; it was a people which began to aspire at the sovereignty of the world.

In this disposition it was not surprising that they should eagerly embrace every opportunity which offered of extending their conquests. We have seen, in treating of the last period of the Grecian history, that Philip II. of Macedon, harassed the Greek states with frequent attacks upon their territories. They complained to the Romans, who immediately declared war against the Macedonian. Philip was defeated, and was glad to purchase a peace by paying a thousand talents, and giving his son Demetrius as a hostage.

The kingdom of Syria was, at this time, the most powerful branch of the empire of Alexander; but ruined in its domestic policy by the foolish wars of the princes of the family of Seleucus, it was in a state of disorder and anarchy. Antiochus, the prince on the throne, had provoked the indignation of the Romans by opposing their arms in Greece, and giving an asylum to Hannibal, then an exile from Carthage. Antiochus was defeated near Thermopylæ, and pursued by the two Scipios into his own kingdom of Syria, where after various losses, he was reduced to the necessity of concluding a peace on the most humiliating terms. He agreed to pay fifteen thousand talents as the expenses of the war, to abandon all his possessions in Europe, and to cede to the Romans the whole of Asia to the west of Taurus, that is, the whole country from the borders of Mesopotamia and Armenia to the Ægean Sea. The Romans, with much meanness, demanded as another condition, that Antiochus should give up Hannibal into their hands; but the Carthaginian had made his escape on the first intelligence that a treaty was in agitation. The younger Scipio (Lucius) was honored on this occasion with the surname of Asiaticus, as the elder brother Publius had gained that of Africanus.

These Asiatic conquests were, in a moral point of view, much

more prejudicial than advantageous to the Romans. Their simple and austere manners began gradually to relax, and they acquired a relish for luxurious enjoyments. This change in the manners of his countrymen roused the virtuous indignation of Cato the censor, the determined enemy of every species of luxury and corruption. At the time when Hannibal was ravaging Italy, and when the Roman state had the strongest motive to retrench all superfluous expenses, a sumptuary statute, called the Oppian law, was passed, which prohibited the women from the use of gold in their ornaments, beyond the quantity of half an ounce, and from wearing garments of different colors, and likewise interdicted the use of chariots. At the end of the Second Punic war the Roman ladies used all their influence to have this law repealed, urging that the motive for its enactment no longer existed. So earnest were they in their purpose, that, forgetting that modest reserve which is their sex's highest ornament, they rushed out into the streets, and besetting every avenue to the forum, laid hold of the men as they passed, and endeavored, both by clamor and by blandishments, to engage their votes for the abrogation of this odious statute. It was no wonder that the rigid virtue of old Cato, then consul, was inflamed with indignation at this spectacle. He poured forth an animated oration on the occasion, but in a tone of keen irony which the greater part of his auditors judged too severe; for the obnoxious law was repealed by a majority of suffrages.

Much more justifiable on this occasion was the severity of Cato than on another which occurred soon after. He incited two of the tribunes, the Petilii, to bring a formal accusation against Scipio Africanus, as guilty of peculation in converting large sums gained in his foreign conquests to his own instead of the public use. The behavior of Scipio on this occasion was consonant to the magnanimity of his character. On the first day of his citation before the assembly of the people, when his accusation was read, appearing not to have listened to it, he entered into an ample detail of all the illustrious services he had rendered his country. His accusers made no reply, not daring to controvert a single word which he had uttered; but contented themselves with adjourning the assembly to the next day. On the morrow, while an immense multitude crowded the forum, Scipio pressed forward to the tribunal, and making a signal for silence, "My countrymen," said he, "it was on this very day that I fought bravely for you against Hannibal and the Carthaginians in the field of Zama, and gained a glorious victory. Is it thus you celebrate that anniversary? Come, let us repair instantly to the capitol, and give our solemn thanks to all the gods for the republic preserved through my means." With one universal acclamation, the whole multitude followed him while he led the way to the temple of Jupiter—and the tribunes were left alone in the forum. They persisted, how-

ever, in appointing a third day for the trial; but Scipio paid no regard to the summons, and the tribunes themselves, either ashamed of their conduct or convinced that the trial must terminate to their own disadvantage and an increase of honor to the accused, thought proper to drop the prosecution. The illustrious Africanus died soon after, in peaceful retirement at his country seat of Linternum.

There is, perhaps, no stronger testimony to the simplicity and integrity of this great man than what is recorded of him by Cicero, that when in the country and free from the cares of public life, he could amuse himself even with the pastimes of children. In the second book, *De Oratore*, is this beautiful passage: "I have been often told (says Crassus) by my father-in-law, that his kinsman Lælius and the great Scipio were frequently wont to fly from the bustle of the town to a quiet retreat in the country, and there to employ themselves in sports that were childish to a degree beyond all belief. Nay, though I should hardly venture to tell it of such men, yet Scævola assured me that when they were at Cajeta and on the banks of the Lucrine, they were wont to pass their time in gathering shells and pebbles on the shore, and in every sort of frolic and amusement, just as the little birds fly about in wanton circles when they have finished the task of building their nests and providing for their young."* Why should Cicero feel ashamed, or apologize for mentioning this anecdote, which in reality does so much honor to the persons of whom it is recorded? No force of words, no pompous eulogium, could convey to us so just an idea, so convincing a proof, of the virtuous simplicity of those men or the probity of their minds, as this beautiful picture. The man who feels the stings of an evil conscience, whose soul is a prey to the turbulent passions of avarice or criminal ambition, can never thus taste pleasure in the sports of innocence. He will seek to drown the reflections of his mind in violent gratifications, and in the intoxication of sensual enjoyments. Seneca has added his testimony to the virtues of the great Scipio in these words: "I write this letter from Linternum, the villa of Scipio Africanus; I reverence his shade, and pay my veneration to that little altar which I have erected to his memory on the very spot where, as I

* Sæpe ex socero meo audivi, cum is diceret, socerum suum Lælium semper ferè cum Scipione solitum rusticari; eosque incredibiliter repuerascere esse solitos, cùm rus ex urbe tanquam ex vinculis evolavissent. Non audeo dicere de talibus viris, sed tamen ita solet narrare Scævola, conchas eos et umbilicos ad Cajetam et ad Lucrinum legere consuesse, et ad omnem animi remissionem ludumque descendere. Sic enim se res habet; ut quemadmodum volucres videmus procreationis atque utilitatis suæ causa fingere et construere nidos; easdem autem, cum aliquid effecerint, lævandi laboris sui causa, passim ac liberè solutas opere volitare: &c.—Cic. de Oratore, lib. ii. c. 6.

conjecture, he lies buried. His soul, I am confident, has returned to that heaven from which it came."*

The younger Scipio [Asiaticus] was soon after impeached for the same crime which had been matter of accusation against his brother. The tribunes, it seems, were determined to have at least one victim from that illustrious house of the Cornelii. He was condemned to pay a heavy fine, as is generally believed, upon false evidence; for when his whole property was seized, his poverty disproved the calumnious accusation, and the senate decreed him a high recompense for the injury he had sustained.

In these measures, the zeal of Cato, though doubtless proceeding from a virtuous motive, was carried to a most blamable excess. The only apology that can be made for it is the shocking profligacy of manners of which his own times furnished a striking example in that society which was known by the name of the *Bacchanalian*. Under the pretence of a religious institution in honor of Bacchus, a vast number of both sexes and of all ranks, associated themselves in a mysterious combination bound to secrecy by tremendous oaths. They held their meetings at midnight, five times every month, and promiscuously indulged in every species of debauchery, and even in the commission of the most atrocious crimes: for the youth of either sex whom they trepanned to their abominable purposes, if unwilling victims, usually paid the forfeit of life. A freed woman, anxious for the safety of her lover, disclosed the mysteries to the consul, Postumius, and to him and to his colleague, the senate committed full power to take every necessary measure for the detection and punishment of all concerned in this horrid association, both in Rome and in the other cities of Italy. The number was found to exceed seven thousand. Of these the most guilty were capitally punished; others betook themselves to voluntary banishment; and not a few, from conscious guilt and the terror of punishment, laid violent hands on themselves. The senate passed a solemn decree that henceforward no individual should presume to offer a sacrifice to Bacchus, at which more than five persons assisted, without a previous permission granted by their body in full assembly.†

The attention of Rome was called off from her domestic concerns by the disorders of Macedonia. Perseus, the elder son of Philip II., had poisoned the ear of his father by false accusations of his younger brother Demetrius, who had successfully negotiated a peace with the Romans, and whom he artfully represented as cherishing a design of dethroning his father and supplanting

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* In ipsa Scipionis Africani villa jacens, hæc scribo: adoratis ejus manibus et aræ, quam sepulchrum esse tanti viri suspicor. Animum quidem ejus in cœlum, ex quo erat, rediisse persuadeo mihi.—Senec. Epist. 86.

† A very interesting account of these matters is given by Livy, lib. xxxix, c. 8 et seq.

himself in the sovereignty of Macedonia. Philip, then in his dotage, listened to these infamous surmises, and cruelly put Demetrius to death by poison. Tortured by remorse, he sunk into profound melancholy, and died a short time after. Among the first acts of the administration of Perseus was an alliance with several of the Grecian states to make war against the Romans. We have already, in treating of the Grecian history, seen the issue of this war in the total defeat of Perseus, who was brought captive to Rome to adorn the triumph of Paulus Æmilius, and in the reduction of Macedonia, which now became a province of the Roman empire.

A few years after this time began the Third Punic war, which terminated in the destruction of Carthage. Massinissa, king of Numidia, who at the time of Scipio's great successes in Africa had become the ally of the Romans, was the cause of this war. The Numidians had seized some territories belonging to Carthage; and a war ensued, in which the Carthaginians were much weakened. The son of Massinissa, a barbarian in every sense, slaughtered in cold blood 58,000 of the Carthaginians after they had laid down their arms. The Romans with great meanness laid hold of that season of calamity to declare war, and their subsequent conduct was equally infamous and disgraceful. The Carthaginians, weakened and dispirited, conscious of their utter inability to withstand this formidable power, made the most humble submission, offering even to acknowledge themselves the subjects of Rome. The senate promised to show them every degree of favor, on condition that they should perform what the consuls required of them, and send three hundred hostages of high rank as a security of that obligation. With natural reluctance, but unsuspicious of treachery, they gave this great pledge, and sent the hostages to Rome. A consular army immediately landed in Africa, and there required, in a solemn manner, that the Carthaginians should give up all the arms and military stores contained in their magazines. "You are now," said they, "under the protection of the Romans, and have no need of arms." In vain they urged, that they were surrounded by enemies, and needed them for their defence. All remonstrance was ineffectual, and they were obliged to submit. The most infernal treachery followed. Bereft of arms, the Carthaginians were in no condition to refuse whatever terms should be proposed. They sent deputies to the Roman camp, to know what had been the determination of the senate with regard to their fate. They were now informed by the consul that it was finally resolved that they should abandon their city, which the senate had decreed should be rased to its foundations; but that they were to be allowed to build on any other part of their territory, provided it was at ten miles' distance from the sea. The amazement and affliction with which these orders were received, are not to be described. The deputies threw

themselves upon the ground, shed tears like children, and endeavored by every motive of compassion and argument of reason to prevail on the consul to depart from this inhuman resolution. But all was in vain. The deputies were ordered instantly to return to Carthage, and to intimate the final determination of the Romans, and the necessity for an immediate compliance.

Despair and frenzy seized the inhabitants of the city upon this fatal intelligence. They prepared for a frantic exertion of resistance, unanimously resolving that death only should separate them from the temples and altars of their gods, the dwellings of their fathers, and the lands of their nativity. Orders were immediately given to barricade the gates of the city; every hand was active in preparation for defence. Arms were formed from every material which could supply them; the women parted with their ornaments of precious metal, and even cut off their hair to form bow-strings. The temples and palaces of the city were turned into workhouses for the fabrication of military engines; the men worked night and day without intermission, the women bringing their victuals at stated hours, and assisting themselves in every labor to which their strength was equal. The Romans now found that they had to do with a people who would defend themselves to the last extremity.

Asdrubal, the nephew of Hannibal, whom the Carthaginians had imprisoned for insulting the Romans, was now called to take the chief command of the forces of his country; and in a desperate engagement he would have cut to pieces the Roman army, had it not been for a masterly stroke of Scipio Æmilianus,* who covered their retreat while they fled across the river. The merit of Scipio was so conspicuous on this occasion, that at Rome he was unanimously chosen consul, though he was but thirty-seven years of age, and the age required by law for that high office was forty-three. He was likewise invested with the sole command of the African war, a charge which he soon fulfilled by reducing the Carthaginians to such extremity that they offered to submit to any conditions, provided only their city might be preserved. But this condition Scipio had it not in his power to grant. In a strong assault on one of the gates, he broke it down, and entering with a large force penetrated to the citadel, which sustained a siege of several days, while the Romans were in possession of the town. At length it was surrendered. Scipio, unwilling to destroy this proud and splendid capital, sent to Rome for further orders. But these contained no mercy for Carthage. The city was set fire to in many different quarters. Pillage, carnage, and desolation ensued. The conflagration lasted for seventeen days. At the

* The son of Æmilius Paulus, and, by adoption, the grandson of Scipio Africanus.

recital of a scene of this kind, it is impossible to restrain our indignation, and not to execrate that barbarous policy which prescribes a conduct so contrary to every worthy feeling of the human mind. Thus ended the ill-fated Carthage, in the 607th year from the building of Rome, and the 146th before the Christian era.

The same year was remarkable for the destruction of Corinth, and the entire extinction of the liberties of Greece. It had for some time been the policy of the Romans to keep up divisions among the different states, and, thus artfully to substitute themselves as umpires in their quarrels, or excite them to weaken and destroy each other. The Achæans, as we have seen, furnished the chief obstacle to the accomplishment of their design, and obliged them to resort to force in order to reduce them to submission. Metellus, the prætor, began the war, which was terminated by Mummius, the consul, who took Corinth by storm and utterly destroyed it. Greece was immediately afterwards reduced to a Roman province, under the name of Achaia.

This was the era of the commencement of a taste for the fine arts at Rome, to which the knowledge of Asiatic luxuries had successfully paved the way. "How happy for mankind," says Abbé Millot, "could a nation be distinguished at once for its virtue and its refinement, and become polished and enlightened while it retained a purity of morals!" But this is a beautiful impossibility.

# BOOK THE FOURTH.

## CHAPTER I.

Sedition of the Gracchi—Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi—Criminal ambition of Jugurtha—The Romans declare war against him, under Metellus and Marius—Death of Jugurtha—Invasion of the Cimbri—Progress of corruption in the Republic—Livius Drusus's projects of Reform—The Social War—Origin of the civil War—Rivalship of Marius and Sylla—War with Mithridates—Marius and Cinna—Sylla obtains absolute authority—His proscriptions—His salutary Reforms—He resigns the Dictatorship—Lepidus defeated and slain—Pompey distinguishes himself—Lucullus's war against Mithridates—H[illegible] by [illegible] Conspiracy of Catiline—Extent of the design—Punishment of the Conspirators—Catiline is killed in battle—Ambitious designs of Julius Cæsar—First triumvirate—Agrarian Law—Cæsar's increase of power—His design for the removal of Cicero—Cicero's pusillanimous conduct—He goes into Exile—His Estates confiscated—Cæsar's Military Exploits in Gaul—Pompey procures the recall of Cicero—Death of Crassus, and rivalship of Pompey and Cæsar.

The Romans, as we have seen, had now, within the period of a very few years, accomplished the total destruction of the Carthaginian empire, the most formidable rival of their power, and had added to their own dominion Spain, Sicily, Macedonia, Greece, and a large portion of Asia. These immense conquests, while they aggrandized the Roman name and diffused the terror of their arms over a great part of the globe, introduced at home that corruption which is the consequence of wealth, and that luxury which consumes the patriotic spirit. Disorders now arose in the commonwealth which undermined its constitution, and ultimately, and even by rapid steps, accomplished its destruction.

At this period arose Tiberius and Caius Gracchus—two brothers, of plebeian blood by their father's side, but ennobled by civic honors—and on their mother's side, by descent from the illustrious Scipio Africanus. Their mother, Cornelia, was wont to stimulate their ambition by this generous reproach: "Why, my sons, must I ever be called the daughter of Scipio, rather than the mother of the Gracchi?" Tiberius, the elder, had borne the charge of Quæstor in Spain; and, being called to account with great severity by the senate upon his return, he conceived a high animosity against that body, and a strong predilection in favor of the popu-

lar interest in the state. On that side, he conceived, lay his path of ambition; and the corruptions in the higher order, from their overgrown fortunes, contrasted with the indigence and hardships of the lower class, afforded a plausible, and in some measure a just pretence for a corrective of that inequality.

Tiberius possessed every accomplishment for a popular leader; a bold and intrepid mind, inflexible perseverance, and a nervous and copious elocution. An enthusiast by nature, it is not improbable, however warped by prejudice, that he had actually persuaded himself that his views were virtuous and patriotic. Being elected a tribune of the people, his first measure was to propose the revival of an ancient statute, the Licinian law, which prohibited any Roman citizen from possessing above five hundred jugera, or about two hundred and sixty acres of land. To conciliate the rich to this restitution, the superfluous land in their possession was to be paid for, at a just price, from the treasury of the state and distributed in certain proportions to the poor. The patricians, as might have been expected, opposed this measure with keen and indignant zeal; and, according to their customary policy, gained over to their side Octavius, one of the tribunes, and by this means secured a *veto*. The proposition would otherwise have been carried by a great majority in the assembly of the tribes. Tiberius, enraged at this disappointment, now adopted a measure equally violent and unconstitutional. The *veto* of the tribunes, which was the surest guard of the popular interest, had ever been respected as a sacred authority. Tiberius was resolved to render it vain and nugatory. He immediately proposed that Octavius should be deprived of his tribuneship. It was in vain that every sound patriot saw the illegality of this proposal, and remonstrated against it as fatal to the constitution. Octavius was deposed by a majority of suffrages, and the revival of the Licinian law was carried with a triumphant hand.

Stimulated by this first success, the zeal of Tiberius now meditated another blow against the aristocracy. He procured a law to be passed, which decreed that the treasures bequeathed to the republic by Attalus, king of Pergamus, and which the senate had hitherto administered for state purposes, should be fairly accounted for and distributed among the poorer citizens; and, as the term of his own tribunate was about to expire, he solicited to be continued in the office for another year, that he might bring to a conclusion his important plan of reform.

Even the populace themselves, who had hitherto supported him, were aware of the illegality of this measure, which tended directly to establish an arbitrary authority in the state, without limitation of period. On the day of election the assembly was ill attended, and the first tribes which were called to vote gave their suffrage against Tiberius. His friends adjourned the assembly till next day; and in the interval Tiberius with his children walked

the streets in mourning, requesting protection from the people against the designs of the patricians, who, as he said, threatened his life. On the following day a tumult arose in the assembly of the people, between the opposite parties. The senators broke up their meeting, and repaired in a body to the forum, followed by an immense crowd of the young patricians armed with clubs and staves. Tiberius, apprehensive of his danger, endeavored to escape with precipitation, his friends following his example: but falling down in the throng, he was assailed by many hands, and slain upon the spot. About three hundred of his followers met with the same fate, and their dead bodies were flung into the Tyber.

Whether the views of Tiberius Gracchus were truly disinterested, and the result of real though misguided patriotism, or whether a criminal ambition was their motive, as his opponents strongly reported, is a question which cannot be with certainty resolved. A strong presumption against him arises from this circumstance, that his brother-in-law, Scipio Æmilianus, and his cousin Scipio Nasica, who was actually instrumental in his death, were of the latter opinion. Scipio Æmilianus, a man of strict virtue and enlightened patriotism, exerted all his powers to quell those dissensions between the senate and people, which he saw the carrying the Licinian law into execution would inevitably tend to exasperate to the hazard of all civil order. The consequence of his generous endeavors was, that he was found dead in his bed.

Some years afterwards, Caius Gracchus, unintimidated by his brother's fate, pursued the same steps which had brought him to destruction. Being elected tribune, he took every measure for a strict enforcement of the Licinian law, which had hitherto been executed with great remissness. He procured the revival of an obsolete statute, which prohibited the capital punishment of any citizen without the concurring sanction of the senate and people; and with the view of extending his popularity beyond the bounds of Rome, he proposed a law by which the right of citizenship should be conferred on all the inhabitants of the Roman territories within the bounds of Italy; with an additional enactment, that whoever claimed the right of citizen, if cast by the censors, might appeal to the popular assembly.

These measures, as may be supposed, gave great disgust to the aristocracy, who, it is plain, were at this time the real supporters of the Roman constitution. But the measure which above every other tended to exasperate the senators against Caius, was an inquiry which he set on foot into the corruptions of their body, in which he so far prevailed, that a law was passed depriving that assembly of all concern in the administration of justice, and declaring that in future the civil judges should be exclusively chosen from the order of knights; an act which the senate justly regarded

not only as a deep insult to their body, but as a fatal blow to the constitution of the state.

In the view of counteracting these most dangerous innovations, and of undermining the power of the demagogue, the party of the senate and patricians set up Livius Drusus, a young man of uncommon abilities, for whom they procured the office of tribune, and instructed him to supplant the influence of Caius by affecting a still more ardent zeal for the popular interest. They despatched Caius at the same time on a mission to Africa to rebuild the city of Carthage. His absence diminished the number of his partisans and increased those of Livius. At his return, he thought to regain his ground by soliciting a renewed appointment to the tribunate, but was mortified by a rejection of his pretensions. Opimius, a man whom he knew to be his determined enemy, was elected to the consulate, and every thing tended to convince him that his popularity was fast declining. It is said that his mother, Cornelia, warned him in passionate terms to escape, by a change of conduct, the fate of his elder brother; but he was deaf to her remonstrances. In a meeting of the Comitia, his partisans having come armed to the forum, a tumult ensued, in which one of them stabbed a lictor of the consul with his pontard; a most furious conflict followed, in which Caius Gracchus, together with about three thousand of the popular party, were massacred in the streets of Rome.

Such was the fate of the Gracchi, men endowed by nature with those talents which, properly directed, might have conduced to the happiness and aggrandizement of their country; but either the victims of a criminal ambition, or precipitated by an intemperance of democratic zeal into measures subversive of all civil order, they perished as the disturbers of the public peace.

There is no female character on whom the ancient writers have lavished more praise than on Cornelia, the mother of Gracchi, of whose greatness of mind under the severest misfortunes they speak in terms of the highest eulogy. She had seen the funerals of twelve of her children, the last of whom were Tiberius and Caius Gracchus. While her friends were lamenting her misfortunes, "Call not me unfortunate," said she; "I shall never cease to think myself a happy woman, who have been the mother of the Gracchi."* Imprudent and dangerous for themselves as she must have thought the conduct of her sons, she most naturally deemed it the result of real virtue and patriotism. Plutarch in-

* 'Cornelia duodecim partûs totidem funeribus recognovit; et de cæteris facile est, quos nec editos nec amissos civitas sensit. Tiberium et Caium Gracchum, quos etiam qui bonos viros negaverit, magnos fatebitur, et occisos vidit et insepultos. Consolantibus tamen, miseramque dicentibus, nunquam, inquit, non felicem me dicam quæ Gracchos peperi.'—Senec. Consol. ad Marc., c. 16.

forms us that she spent the remaining years of her life in a villa, near Misenum, visited, respected, and beloved by the most eminent men, both Greeks and Romans, and honored by interchanging presents even with foreign princes. Her conversation was delightful when she recounted anecdotes of her father Africanus: but all were astonished when she spoke freely of her sons, of their great deeds and their untimely fate, and this without ever shedding a tear. "It was thought by some," continues Plutarch, "that the pressure of age and misfortune had deadened her maternal feelings; but they (he adds) who were of that weak opinion, were ignorant that a superior mind, enlightened by a liberal education, can rise above all the calamities of life; and that though fortune may sometimes oppress virtue, she cannot deprive her of that serenity and resolution which never forsake her in the day of adversity."

The universal corruption that now prevailed at Rome was in nothing more conspicuous than in a celebrated event which happened at this time. The old king Massinissa, whom we have mentioned as an ally of the Romans at the time of the first invasion of Africa by Scipio, left three sons, who jointly governed Numidia; till, by the death of his brothers, Micipsa remained sole master of the kingdom. This prince, though he had two sons, Adherbal and Hiempsal, adopted his nephew Jugurtha, a young man of promising talents, whose friendship he weakly thought to secure for his cousins by giving him an equal share with them of his dominions. No sooner was Micipsa dead, than this ungrateful youth resolved to attain an undivided empire by putting them to death. Hiempsal was his first victim; and Adherbal, dreading a similar fate, betook himself to Rome, to sue for justice and to entreat the aid and protection of the Romans, to whom his father had rendered his kingdom tributary. But the money of Jugurtha had been beforehand with him. He had bribed to his interest a sufficient party in the senate to procure a reference to ten commissioners, who were sent into Africa with plenary powers to decide between the contending parties. These, by similar policy, the traitor won to his interest; so that they declared him innocent of the charge, and decreed to him the sovereignty of one half of Numidia. Jugurtha now pursued his schemes for the destruction of Adherbal, and, openly declaring war, besieged him in the town of Cirtha. The Romans sent their deputies to put a stop to such culpable proceedings; but these, like the former commissioners, were not proof against corruption. Adherbal was obliged to capitulate and throw himself on the mercy of Jugurtha, by whom he was immediately put to death.

These flagrant enormities, which called loud for vengeance, continued yet to meet with shameful palliation in the Roman senate; but the Roman people were not bribed; and their cries for justice at length compelled the rulers of the republic to declare war

against Jugurtha. In the interval of a truce, this traitor appeared in person at Rome, and had the confidence to justify his proceedings in full senate; where, as before, he had so lavishly bestowed his money as to insure his acquittal. A continuance, however, of the same conduct excited at length the utmost indignation of the Romans, and Metellus, the consul, was sent against him, at the head of a large army.

Metellus chose for his lieutenant the celebrated Marius, a man of mean birth, who possessed great military talents and the utmost personal intrepidity, but with a total want of every generous and virtuous principle. Instigated by ambition, and bound by no ties of gratitude to the man who had raised him from obscurity, he sought leave to go to Rome, and there represented the conduct of Metellus in so unfavorable a point of view, and talked so plausibly of what he could himself have done in the same situation, that he gained the people to his interest, was elected to the consulate, and obtained the charge of prosecuting the war against Jugurtha. Metellus, though in the train of success, being thus superseded, returned to Rome, where a just sense of his services prevailed over every injurious impression, and he was decreed the honor of a triumph.

But Marius with all his military abilities, was obliged to employ treachery to finish the Jugurthan war. The perfidious character of Jugurtha justified, as he thought, a similar policy in his enemy. Sylla, then acting as quæstor to Marius, seduced Bocchus, king of Mauritania, the father-in-law of Jugurtha, from his alliance; and that prince, to purchase peace with the Romans, delivered up Jugurtha into their hands. He was brought to Rome in chains, and, after gracing the triumph of Marius, was thrown into a dungeon and starved to death.

The Romans were at this time under a serious alarm from the barbarous nations, who, pouring down from the northern parts of Europe, suddenly made their appearance in a countless host even upon the frontiers of Italy. This horde of savages, who were said to amount to more than 300,000 men in arms, attended with their women, children, and cattle, were known by the name of Cimbri; but there is no certainty of the precise country from which they migrated. The consul Papirius Carbo was despatched to Illyricum to oppose their progress, but with inadequate force; for they overwhelmed his army like a tempest. They fought in a dense and solid mass, of which the foremost ranks were chained together by their girdles. Had this torrent forced its way across the Rhætian Alps into Italy, it is hard to say what might have been the fate of the Roman empire; but fortunately they chose a different course, and dissipated the alarm for a time by passing onward through the southern Gaul to the vicinity of the Pyrenees.

The diversion of the barbarous Cimbri to the quarter of Spain gave only a temporary respite to the Roman arms. They began

to overrun the Roman Province in Gaul in separate large bodies, passing from the southward to the neighborhood of the Rhine and the banks of the Danube. In one large body, they poured down by the passes of Carinthia, or the valley of Trent, to join another detachment on the banks of the Po. Marius, now in his fourth consulate, had for his special department the province of Gaul, and consequently the charge of opposing these invaders, who, from the cautious movements of the Roman army, now began to insult them as a dastardly foe that durst not meet them in the field. Marius signally displayed his talents as a general by attacking these separate divisions, while they had spread themselves over the country, intent solely on ravage and plunder. In one campaign 200,000 of the barbarians were slain in the field, and 90,000 taken prisoners, among whom was Teutoboechus, one of their kings. In another engagement on the Po, the remainder of this savage horde was entirely destroyed. The popularity of Marius, from this great success, procured his election to the consulate for the fifth time, and the honors of a triumph.

The plunder of Jugurtha's kingdom brought a new accession of wealth to the Romans. They now found not only their ambition gratified by their extensive conquests, but their appetite for luxury, which was daily increasing. We have seen its effects in that shameful corruption of the senate, the highest order, and the natural guardians of the virtue of the republic. Yet even this was but the dawning of that profligacy of manners and of principle, which, from this period, we shall see pervaded all ranks of the state. The annals of the Roman republic now become only the history of the leaders of different factions, who assuage their avarice, their ambition, and revenge, in the blood of their fellow citizens.

Livius Drusus, as tribune of the people, involved the republic in a war with the allied states, which was a prelude to those civil wars which ended in its destruction. This tribune renewed the project of Caius Gracchus for extending to the allies the rights of citizenship. The proposition was violently combated; the allies contended that as they paid their taxes to the state, and supplied in war a great proportion of the legions, it was but just they should share the privileges of the republic as well as its burdens. On the other hand to multiply to so vast an extent the popular votes in the Comitia, and thus extend the field of corruption and the empire of tumult in all the public proceedings, appeared to involve the most ruinous consequences to the state. The Roman populace itself dreaded the diminution of its influence by this admixture of aliens;* and, in reality, the measure was cordially

* The number of Roman citizens, which, at the time of the census made by Servius Tullius, amounted only to 83,000, had increased at the commencement of the Social war, to 463,000 men capable of bearing arms.—Beaufort, Rep. Rom. l. iv. c. 4.

supported only by the factious and ambitious spirit of the tribunes themselves. In this state of public opinion, the fate of Drusus, who was stabbed by an unknown hand while sitting in his tribunal, excited neither alarm nor regret.

But the allies in Italy were exasperated by the opposition to their claims, and by the murder of their champion. The principal states entered into a secret league for arming in support of their pretensions, while a formal embassy was sent, in their joint name, to demand from the senate and people of Rome what they represented as a matter of right and justice. The senate, apprized of all their preparations, sent a peremptory refusal, and ordered several legions to take the field against them, nominally headed by the consuls, but, in reality under the command of Marius, Sylla, Pompey, and Crassus, all at that time men of the highest military reputation. But even under these able generals, the success of the allies in many severe conflicts was such, that the senate thought it prudent to listen to terms, and to allow the privilege of citizenship to the inhabitants of such of the states as should lay down their arms and return to submission and allegiance. These concessions dissolved the league, and the new citizens found, after all, that their coveted privileges were of very little consequence. The senate and censors formed them into eight new tribes, who in the Comitia were to give their votes last, which reduced their influence to a mere trifle.

This war between Rome and her allies, thence termed the Social war, was an easy preparative for that which followed between her own citizens. To excite a civil war was, in the present situation of things, a matter of no great difficulty. It was only necessary that there should be two rivals in the path of ambition equally able and equally intrepid; and such men were Marius and Sylla. The former, we have seen, had raised himself from obscurity by the mere force of talents. Sylla was of an illustrious family; he had all the talents of his rival, and yet more unbounded ambition; his manners were engaging; he had acquired immense wealth, and he knew how to employ it with great judgment in rendering himself popular. His distinguished military conduct in the Social war increased the public favor; and he was elected consul, with the charge of prosecuting a war in Asia against Mithridates, king of Pontus.

This prince had given the Romans the highest provocation. By the seizure of Bithynia and Cappadocia, he had encroached on the tributary states of the republic; he had seized a large part of Greece—and, by his fleet in the Ægean Sea, had taken several ships belonging to the Romans. He had likewise authorized a general massacre, in one day, of every Roman citizen in the lesser Asia. No sooner, however, had Sylla taken the field, than the intrigues of his rival Marius, and of Sulpitius, a tribune of the people who had devoted himself to the interest of Marius, pro-

cured his recall while still within the limits of Italy. He learned at the same time that some of his kindred had been murdered at Rome by the party of his enemies, and suspected that a similar fate was intended for himself. It was necessary, therefore, to form a bold and decisive resolution. His army, warmly attached to their leader, had received the order for his recall with high indignation. In an animated speech to his troops he reminded them of the honors they had won under his command, and exposed in strong terms the malicious and sanguinary designs of his rival, and the danger which such proceedings threatened to the commonwealth itself. He found the army disposed to implicit obedience to his commands, and he boldly proposed to lead them on to Rome. "Let us go," said they, with one voice; "lead us on to avenge the cause of oppressed liberty." Sylla accordingly led them on, and they entered Rome sword in hand. Marius and Sulpitius fled with precipitation from the city. Sylla restrained his army from committing any outrage, and then, with great deliberation and without a shadow of opposition, proceeded to annul all the laws and ordinances which had passed during the administration of his rival. The senate, at his instigation, then pronounced a decree which proscribed Marius and Sulpitius as enemies of their country, whom all persons were required to pursue and put to death. The consequence was, that the head of Sulpitius was soon after sent to Rome. Marius, alone, and a fugitive, was taken in the marshes of Minturnæ, where he had sought concealment by plunging himself up to the chin in water. He was suffered to escape, and got over into Africa; where being still persecuted, and required by the Roman governor to depart from the province, "Go," said he to the messenger, "and tell thy master that thou hast seen Marius sitting amidst the ruins of Carthage." Plutarch, who relates this anecdote, says that Marius meant by it to claim the compassion of the Roman prætor, by drawing the comparison between his own lot and that of the fallen Carthage; both striking examples of the instability of fortune. Marius then retired with his son to a small island on the African coast, where he soon after received intelligence that a strong party had been formed at Rome in his favor, where Cinna, one of his firmest friends and partisans, had been elected to the consulate.

One of the first measures of the new consul was to impeach Sylla before the assembly of the people. It was a law of the state, that any man, invested with a military command, might frustrate any charge brought against him by going on service. Sylla therefore defeated the purpose of his enemies by repairing immediately to his army, and commencing the campaign against Mithridates.

His partisans at Rome, in the meantime, took advantage of a series of violent and illegal proceedings of Cinna, to procure his deposition from office, and his expulsion from the city. Marius, returning to Italy at this juncture, found means to levy a consid-

erable army, and joining his forces to those of Cinna, they laid siege to Rome, at that time reduced to great distress by famine. In this situation, the senate capitulated with these traitors in arms, repealed the attainder of Marius, and restored Cinna to his consular function. They entered the city triumphantly at the head of the army, and immediately gave orders for a general massacre of all those citizens whom they regarded as their enemies. The scene was horrible beyond all description. The heads of the senators, streaming with blood, were stuck up before the *rostra*; "a dumb senate, (says an ancient writer,) but which yet cried aloud to Heaven for vengeance." At the succeeding election of magistrates, Marius and Cinna proclaimed themselves consuls without the formality of a vote of the people: but the mind of Marius, ever the prey of turbulent passions, which he sought to allay by intemperate drinking, fell a victim to their joint efforts, and he died, as is said, in a fit of debauch.

Sylla in the meantime, with the army, had contributed to the glory of the republic by putting an end to the war with Mithridates. This very prince had conceived the proud design of wresting all Asia, together with Greece, from the dominion of the Romans; but the loss of two great battles at Chæronea and Orchomenos put an end to his prospects of ambition, and forced him to conclude a humiliating peace. "Sylla," says Velleius Paterculus, "deserved censure for many things; but one thing was meritorious—he left his private interest neglected till he had finished his war against the enemies of Rome." His own revenge was his real object; and a dreadful revenge it was.

On returning to Rome, he found the consuls Carbo and Norbanus (for Cinna was now dead) with above 200,000 men in arms to oppose him: but he was beloved by the soldiers, and he had address enough to seduce a whole consular army, with Cethegus, Verres, and the young Pompey, to join themselves to his party. With this powerful reinforcement he entirely defeated the consuls, and prepared now to act a part apparently contrary to every former indication of his nature. There cannot be a doubt that murder is a contagious disease; that with the first shedding of blood the nature is infuriated, and the wretch once imbrued in it rushes on with enthusiasm to the most atrocious cruelties. Sylla had now caught the contagion. He ordered 6000 men to be massacred in cold blood, who, on promise of their lives, had laid down their arms. His proscriptions were dreadful beyond all example. Every day produced a new catalogue of those who were doomed to destruction; he declared that he would not spare an enemy whom he had in Italy. The punishment did not stop at the supposed offenders: their family and posterity to the third generation were declared infamous, and incapable of enjoying any office in the state; a proof that tyrannic cruelty is blind to consequences and suspects not how short-lived, from the very nature of things,

its empire must necessarily be. It was amidst these horrid scenes that the abandoned Catiline first gratified that profligate and savage disposition which afterwards aimed at the general destruction of the state.

Sylla was now without a rival in authority, and absolute master of the government, which, therefore, properly speaking, was no longer a republic; yet he chose to recur to the popular authority in order to establish himself in power, and he was nominated in the Comitia, *dictator for an unlimited space of time.*

He was now secure, and seemed to turn his thoughts to the restoration of order and tranquillity in the state. He restored the senate to its judicial power, of which, for a considerable time, it had been deprived. He published severe laws against murder and oppression; he regulated the cursus to the high offices of prætor, quæstor, and tribune; providing, with regard to the last, that any tribunes of the people should be chosen unless from the body of the senators, and enacting that their election to that function should preclude for ever their attaining to a higher dignity. This regulation effectually prevented that once enviable office from being any longer an object of ambition.

Having made these prudent and salutary reforms, Sylla took another step which excited universal surprise:—he resigned the dictatorship. The man who had destroyed above a hundred thousand of his fellow citizens—who, in the course of his proscriptions, had put to death about ninety senators and above 2600 Roman knights—had courage to resign the absolute authority he had acquired, to become a private citizen, and to offer to give an account to the public of his conduct. But he had gained partisans to his interest more powerful, if not so numerous as his enemies. The senate were his friends: because, by his late regulations, he had restored to that body a great part of its ancient dignity; and had ever stood forth the supporter of their order against Marius, who was the champion of the people. The patricians saw, with pleasure, that they were once more considered as the superior rank in the state. In these respects, Sylla professed himself the friend of the ancient constitution of his country; and as such, in spite of all his atrocities, he has been regarded by the most enlightened historians. He, therefore, had a powerful party who approved of his political conduct; and above all, he was the idol of the army, who had all along profited by his measures and gained by his indulgence; he had given freedom to ten thousand slaves, and had gratified by rewards all his partisans. These were his guardians, and enabled him to walk with the security of an innocent man in that city which he had deluged with blood. Sylla, however, did not long survive his change of state. Pleasure and debauchery brought on him a loathsome disease, of which he died. He was certainly a man of great strength of mind, and had some of the qualities of an heroic character; but he lived in evil times, when it was impossible at once to be great and to be virtuous.

On the death of Sylla, the civil war began anew. Lepidus, the consul, aspiring at similar dominion, but a man of no abilities, levied a large army, and, on the pretence of restoring the forfeited estates to those whom Sylla had driven into banishment by his proscriptions, openly proclaimed his purpose of annulling all the late political regulations. The senate justly took the alarm; Catulus and Pompey were invested with authority to provide for the safety of the republic, and immediately taking the field with a superior force, Lepidus sustained two defeats, and took shelter in Sardinia, where he died.

It was now that Pompey began to distinguish himself. He had already, with no other command than as the general of an army, attained to the reputation of possessing great talents by his victories over the Marian party in Africa, Sicily, and Italy. Sertorius was the head of that party in Spain, where his civil and military abilities had gained him the highest popularity. Metellus and Pompey confessed their inability to subdue this formidable partisan in the field, by meanly setting a prize upon his head. This policy was successful; it drew off Perpenna from his interest, who had hitherto supported his cause. The traitor invited his friend to a banquet, and a hired assassin stabbed him amidst the tumult of festivity. The party of Sertorius was undone by the death of its leader; and Pompey, returning to Rome, had the honors of a triumph.

Mithridates, king of Pontus, was earnestly bent upon recovering those possessions in Asia of which the Romans had deprived him. Lucullus, a very able general, was entrusted with the conduct of the war against him. He defeated Mithridates in two engagements, and recovered Bithynia. Meantime Mithridates had sent a fleet to Italy to support the rebellion of Spartacus, who was carrying on war against the republic at the head of forty thousand slaves, and had defeated an army commanded by two prætors, and another headed by both the consuls. This rebellion Pompey had the credit of subduing; although, in fact, the victory which cost Spartacus his life was achieved by Crassus, before Pompey's arrival. In the following year, Pompey and Crassus were elected consuls, and the latter, by his splendid festivals and shows, acquired with the people a high measure of popularity. Lucullus had now compelled Mithridates to retreat to Armenia, and the kingdom of Pontus submitted to the Roman arms.

Lucullus now marched against Mithridates and Tigranes, and had the honor of signally defeating their united forces; but it was his misfortune or his blame to become unpopular with his army, and in the next engagement the Pontic king gained an important victory. The consequence was, that his enemies at Rome accused him of protracting the war from motives of interest. Pompey, who secretly wished to supplant him in his command, procured some of his friends, among whom were Julius Cæsar and

Cicero, to propose that he should supersede Lucullus, and a decree was obtained to that effect. When the intelligence was brought to Pompey he feigned the utmost surprise. The rival generals came to an interview in Galatia, which passed in mutual reproaches. "It is your policy," said Lucullus, "to triumph over an enemy whom another has already subdued, and thus to gather laurels which you have not won." — "And you," said Pompey, "covet victory solely for the sake of plunder, and ravage countries only to fill your coffers." Both reproaches had some foundation in truth. Pompey prosecuted the war against Mithridates, and soon compelled his ally Tigranes into terms of unconditional submission. In the following campaign he put an end to the dominion of Mithridates. One of that prince's concubines treacherously surrendered to the Roman general a capital fortress of the kingdom; and Mithridates soon after, seeing his fortunes desperate, had recourse to a voluntary death. Pontus and Syria were then reduced to the condition of provinces of the Roman empire.

On the return of Lucullus to Rome, his acknowledged services procured him the honor of a triumph; and he passed the remainder of his life in luxurious retirement. Fond at the same time of study, and of the conversation of the most ingenious and polite men of his time, he spent whole days with them in his library and gardens, which were open to all the learned men of Rome and Greece.* If any thing can be said to vindicate that excess to which he carried the luxury of the table, it is that his higher morals were irreproachable; and voluptuary as he was, he had yet a higher pleasure in acts of humanity and beneficence.

While Pompey was thus employed in Asia, a most dangerous conspiracy threatened the entire destruction of Rome. Lucius Sergius Catilina, we have already observed, had been one of the ministers of the cruelties of Sylla. He was a youth of a noble family, but with a character stained with every manner of crime. While Sylla was dictator, he had risen to considerable honors: he had been quæstor, and had held a command in Africa as prætor; but his vices disgraced these splendid employments, and the wealth which he acquired by rapine and extortion he consumed in the most infamous debaucheries. Foiled in his design of obtaining the consulate for himself and his friend Piso, he first determined to wreak his vengeance on the more successful candidates, Cotta and Torquatus; and this his first conspiracy, which was to begin by the murder of these magistrates and all their partisans among the senate, appears to have failed of success more from the want of concerted measures in the conspirators themselves, than from the vigilance of the sovereign power of the state. The disappoint-

* See Plutarch in Vit. Lucul. who details at considerable length the luxurious life of this celebrated Roman.

ment of this design* served only to stimulate his daring and malignant spirit to enterprises of greater danger and atrocity. Lost in character, drowned in debt, and thence unable to find any other resource for the support of his vices and debaucheries, he now formed the desperate scheme of extirpating the whole body of the senate, of assassinating all the magistrates of the commonwealth, and satiating his avarice and ambition by the command of the republic and the plunder of the city.

Catiline gained to his interest the profligate of all ranks and denominations; knights, patricians, and senators, who were desperate bankrupts, and some high-born women of intriguing and abandoned character, helped to increase his party. To facilitate the execution of his designs, he once more solicited the consulship, but was again disappointed, from the known infamy of his character. The illustrious Cicero was elected to that office. Happy for the republic that in those perilous times she had this great man for her guardian and protector! He had for his colleague Caius Antonius, a weak and indolent man, who left to him all the burden, and consequently all the honor, of the administration.

In the meantime, Catiline had brought his plot to maturity. Troops were levied, arms provided, a distinct department and function was assigned to each of the principal conspirators, and a day was fixed for the commencement of operations in the heart of Rome. The city was to be set fire to in a hundred different quarters at once; the consuls were to be assassinated; and an immense list was prepared of the chief citizens who were doomed to instantaneous destruction. A plot of this nature, in which so many were concerned, could not long be kept secret. Fulvia, a woman of loose character, the mistress of one of the conspirators, probably gained by the spies of Cicero, gave notice to the consuls of the whole plan of the conspiracy. The senate passed that powerful decree which armed the consuls with dictatorial authority for the safety of the republic;† and Cicero under this ample warrant might, perhaps, without challenge of exceeding his powers, have seized the traitor, and put him instantly to death. But he wished to discover his numerous accomplices, and thus effectually to extinguish the conspiracy. We are astonished when we read that animated oration of Cicero, the first against Catiline; and know that the traitor had the audacity to sit in the senate-house while it was delivered, and while every man of worth or regard for character deserted the bench on which he sat, and left him a spectacle to the whole assembly. We are equally astonished when we learn that he was suffered still to remain at liberty; nay, to leave

* Of this first conspiracy of Catiline, the accounts of the Roman historians are extremely imperfect and confused.

† Dent operam consules ne quid respublica detrimenti capiat.

Rome and to appear at the head of an army in open rebellion. But it was one peculiarity of the Roman constitution, during the republic, that the laws did not allow the detention of accused persons in order to trial. A citizen, accused of whatever crime, continued at full liberty till judgment was pronounced against him, and might, if he foresaw the issue of the trial, withdraw himself from Rome as a voluntary exile.

A remarkable circumstance, showing the extent of this formidable conspiracy, was now brought to light. The ambassadors of the Allobroges having fruitlessly applied to the Roman senate for a redress of grievances, Publius Lentulus, the prætor, gave them assurance in private, of protection and favor, provided they would return to their province, and dispose their countrymen to arm in support of a powerful party, which, he affirmed, would soon have the command of the republic. Of this negotiation Cicero received intelligence. The consul, with infinite prudence, instructed his informant to encourage the correspondence between Lentulus and the ambassadors, and to urge the latter to demand from Lentulus a list of the names of all his partisans, in order to show to their countrymen the number and power of those friends on whose protection they might depend, if they armed in support of this great revolution in the state. Lentulus fell into the snare that was laid for him. He gave a list of the names of all concerned in the conspiracy of Catiline to the ambassadors, who, setting out upon their journey, were waylaid, and their despatches seized by order of the consul. Cicero had now in his hands the most complete evidence against the whole of the conspirators. Assembling the senate, he produced first the written evidence, consisting of letters, under the hands of the chief partisans of Catiline, together with lists of arms, and the places where they were deposited; as well as separate instructions for the ready cooperation of the different leaders in their distinct departments of the plot. The deputies of the Allobroges were produced before the senate, and made no scruple to confirm the proof arising from those documents.

It remained for the senate to determine what course was to be pursued with these detected traitors; and the difference of opinion which prevailed on that subject afforded a strong criterion of the alarming extent of this atrocious design, and the influence of those who secretly favored it. Silanus, the consul elect, proposed an immediate sentence of death on the whole of the conspirators. His opinion was powerfully combated by Julius Cæsar, who maintained that the confiscation of their estates, and the committal of their persons in charge to some of the best affected of the Italian communities, was as effectual a curb to their designs, and more agreeable to law than capital punishment. Cicero, without delivering any opinion, painted in strong colors the necessity of an immediate and powerful antidote to prevent the utter ruin of the

state, and declared that he would execute the orders of the senate, whatever they should be, at the hazard of his own life. Cato closed the debate by observing that the vote of that night would seal the fate of Rome, and convince her intestine enemies whether their party or the guardians of the republic were to prevail in this awful conflict. He concluded by voting for the immediate execution of all the conspirators already in custody, and a vigorous effort for the extermination of the rebel and his army then in the field. This opinion prevailed, and was immediately carried into effect. Lentulus and his accomplices were the same day, without form of trial, strangled in prison by the consul's warrant.

An army, headed by Antonius, now took the field against Catiline. He came up with him in the neighborhood of Fesulæ. The rebel made a desperate defence; but, overpowered by numbers, he threw himself, with frantic courage, into the midst of the enemy, and died a better death than his crimes merited.

Among the many who had incurred some suspicion of sharing in the guilty designs of Catiline was Julius Cæsar. This young man, the son-in-law of Cinna, was of a most illustrious patrician family. The companions of his youth had known him only as a fop and a debauchee; but pleasure and effeminacy were the assumed disguises of a daring and ambitious spirit. Sylla, who was an excellent judge of human nature, had even penetrated into his real character, and numbered him among the proscribed. "There is many a Marius (said he) in the person of that young man." Cæsar, aware of the dangerous consequences of these suspicions, quitted Rome, and did not return thither till after Sylla's death. He became more circumspect in his conduct, and learned the better to conceal his designs, till the proper opportunity of bringing them into action. Meantime he courted the people, and was high in their favor before he accepted any office in the state. His largesses had gained a great party to his interest, though they ruined his private fortune; and when he was created Edile, it was generally believed he was in indigent circumstances; yet the games and spectacles which he exhibited surpassed every thing hitherto seen in magnificence.

At the time when Pompey returned from his Asiatic expedition, Cæsar held the office of prætor. The ambitious spirit of Pompey could brook neither a superior nor an equal. Crassus, a man of mean talents, but of a restless and ambitious spirit, had, by means of his enormous wealth, gained a very considerable party to his interest; for money at Rome could always insure popularity, and thus render even the weakest of men formidable to the liberties of their country. Thus, with the greatest inequality of talents, Pompey and Crassus were rivals in the path of ambition; and Cæsar, who at this time aspired to the consulate, and was well aware that, by courting exclusively either of these rivals, he infallibly made the other his enemy, showed the reach of his political genius by art-

fully effecting a reconciliation between them, and thus securing the friendship of both. Cato foresaw the fatal consequences of this union of interests, which was termed the *Triumvirate*, and he openly prognosticated the ruin of the republic. In the meantime Cæsar, by their joint interest, obtained the consulate, and greatly increased his popularity by procuring a new agrarian law to be passed, which authorized the division of certain lands in Campania among 20,000 of the poorer citizens, who had at least three children.

It is not a little surprising that a measure of this kind, so contrary to all good policy, should be so frequently proposed and adopted in the Roman commonwealth. On this subject the reflections of Dr. Ferguson are most judicious.—"In great and populous cities, indigent citizens are ever likely to be numerous, and would be more so if the idle and profligate were taught to hope for lucrative and gratuitous provisions to quiet their clamors and to suppress their disorders. If men were to have estates in the country because they are factious and turbulent in the city, it is evident that public lands, and all the resources of the most prosperous state, would not be sufficient to supply their wants. Commissioners appointed for the distribution of such public favors would be raised above the ordinary magistrates, and above the laws of their country. They might remodel their own creatures, and keep the citizens in general in a state of dependence on their will. The authors of such proposals, while they are urging the state and the people to ruin, would be considered as their only patrons and friends. 'It is not the law I dread,' said Cato; 'it is the reward expected for obtaining it.'"* These reflections are so obviously the dictates of good sense, that even the wildest demagogue must admit their force: and hence we are furnished with a just criterion to appreciate the real characters of the proposers of such measures, and to unmask the mock patriotism of such men as Cassius, the Gracchi, and Julius Cæsar.

Cæsar, in order to strengthen his interest with Pompey, gave him his daughter in marriage. He had now attained to that height of consideration with the people, that the senate was completely intimidated, and durst not oppose him; a strong proof of which was given by the passing of a law by which the senators took a solemn oath not to oppose any measure that should be determined in a popular assembly during his consulate. He gave the government of the provinces to his chief partisans, and took for himself those of Cisalpine and Transalpine Gaul and Illyria for five years, together with the command of four legions. The legion consisted at this time of about 4,000 men.

Among the men whom Cæsar most dreaded was Cicero. He

* Ferguson's Rom. Rep., vol. ii. p. 411. 8vo. edit.

knew him to be a true patriot, a real friend of his country and its constitution, and therefore an enemy to all usurpation of a preponderating power in the state.* He therefore beheld in him the greatest obstacle to his own ambitious designs, and resolved to accomplish his ruin. Cicero was aware of his own danger, and therefore had for some time declined all share in the offices of state; while his high character and eminent public services procured him the esteem of every man of virtue. But such were not the prevailing party in the republic, either in point of influence or numbers; for the populace ever bestowed their favor on those who best paid their court, and ministered most largely to their avarice and love of pleasure. Clodius, a mortal enemy of Cicero, was pitched on by Cæsar as his fittest instrument to accomplish the ruin of this illustrious man. By Cæsar's influence, Clodius was chosen one of the tribunes of the people, and was no sooner in office than he proposed various laws which tended to ingratiate himself with the people, and at the same time secure the favor of the chiefs of the republic. He procured the passing of an act for remitting the debts due by the poorer class for corn bought from the public granaries; and another for the restoring and increasing the number of public corporations, which had been abolished on account of the turbulence and faction of which they were the seminaries. He gained much influence with the senate by a regulation for abridging the power of the censors in purging that order; and finally he proposed a law which made it a high offence to condemn or put to death any citizen before he had been judged by the people. This important law was evidently levelled at Cicero, who, by his authority as consul, warranted indeed by a decree of the senate, had condemned Catiline's accomplices to death—a measure which the necessity of the times and the imminent peril of the republic had justified in the opinion of all good men.

Cicero, with all his high qualities, was of a weak and pusillanimous spirit. Instead of manfully endeavoring to avail himself of the great and essential services which he had rendered his country, sufficient to insure him the support of every good citizen, in

* The first occasion on which Cicero distinguished himself as an orator, was one of great difficulty and delicacy, the defence of Roscius, who, during the time of Sylla's horrible proscriptions, had been robbed of his whole fortune by some of his wicked relations, who had put to death his father under the pretended authority of that proscription, though in reality his name was not in the list of victims. A favorite of Sylla, named Chrysogonus, had shared this infamous plunder, and, to secure his possession, accused the son of being the murderer of his father. Such was, at this time, the dread of offending Sylla, that none of the old advocates or orators would undertake the defence of this injured man. Cicero, then in his twenty-seventh year, nobly stood forth as his defender; and, with admirable skill and address, prevailed in obtaining justice for his client, without incurring the resentment of that man who was the protector of his oppressors. The reputation of the pleader rose from that moment to the highest pitch, and he was regarded as the first orator of the age.

averting or opposing this adverse current which threatened his destruction, he meanly sunk under the apprehension of its force. His resolution entirely forsook him. He clothed himself in a mourning habit, as did most of the equestrian order to which he belonged; and he presented himself in the assembly of the people, in the abject character of a suppliant whose life and fortunes were entirely at their disposal. He claimed the friendship of Pompey, to whom he had done essential services; but he shamefully abandoned him. Cato, the real friend of Cicero, and who would have generously supported him at all hazards, was purposely invested with a commission to reduce the island of Cyprus, in order to remove him from Rome at this critical moment when the fate of his friend was in dependence. Before leaving the city, he is said to have counselled Cicero to yield to the necessity of circumstances, and betake himself to voluntary banishment from his ungrateful country.

After some ineffectual endeavors to try the attachment of his former friends, which only ended in fresh mortification, Cicero followed the counsel of Cato. He set off in the middle of the night, and embarked at Brundisium for Macedonia, on his way to Thessalonica, where he had fixed the scene of his exile. Here he betrayed in a lamentable degree the weakness of his mind. The letters which he wrote to Atticus, it has been well observed, "resemble more the wailings of an infant, or the strains of a tragedy composed to draw tears, than the language of a man supporting the cause of integrity in the midst of unmerited trouble."* "I wish I may see the day (he thus writes to his friend) when I shall be disposed to thank you for having prevented me from resorting to a voluntary death; for I now bitterly regret that I yielded in that matter to your entreaty. What species of misfortune have I not endured? Did ever any one fall from so high a state, in so good a cause, with such abilities and knowledge, and with such a share of the public esteem? Cut off in such a career of glory, deprived of my fortune, torn from my children, debarred the sight of a brother dearer to me than myself—but my tears will not allow me to proceed." In contemplating such a picture, the historian I have just quoted truly says, "It appears from this and many other scenes of the life of this remarkable man, that though he loved virtuous actions, yet his virtue was accompanied with so unsuitable a thirst of the praise to which it entitled him, that his mind was unable to sustain itself without this foreign assistance; and when the praise to which he aspired for his consulate was changed into obloquy and scorn, he seems to have lost the sense of good or evil in his own conduct and character." How different this conduct from the sentiments he had expressed as a philosopher, in his beautiful

* Ferguson's Rom. Rep. vol. ii. p. 448.

treatise *De Finibus*, l. i.: "Succumbere doloribus, eosque humili animo imbecilloque ferre, miserum est: ob eamque debilitatem animi, multi parentes, multi avancos, nonnulli patriam, plerique autem seipsos penitus perdiderunt."* But speculative and practical philosophy are widely different.

Cicero's departure from Rome was regarded as a full justification of that sentence of banishment which Clodius immediately caused to be passed against him as an enemy of the republic, accompanied with a decree for confiscating his whole estates, and demolishing and razing to the ground his elegant palaces and villas. Such were the rewards of that true patriot whom, a few months before, his country had justly hailed as its preserver from utter destruction! But popular opinion is ever apt to pass from one extreme to another; and the latter part of the life of Cicero was a perpetual alternation of triumph and disgrace.

We have remarked that, in the divisions of the provinces between Cæsar, Pompey, and Crassus, the first of these had for his share those extensive territories on both sides of the Alps, distinguished by the names of Gallia Cisalpina and Transalpina. Of these he obtained the government for five years, and in that period he carried to its highest pitch the military glory of the republic, and his own reputation as a consummate general. The Helvetians, leaving their own territory, had attempted to obtain a settlement within the Roman Province. Cæsar, in the first year of his government, utterly defeated these invaders, and drove them back to their native seats with the loss of near 200,000 slain in the field. The Germans under Ariovistus, who had attempted a similar invasion, were repelled with immense slaughter, their leader narrowly escaping in a small boat across the Rhine. The Belgæ, the Nervii, the Celtæ, the Suevi, Menapii, and other warlike nations, were all successively brought under subjection. In the fourth year of his command he invaded Britain. The motive to this enterprise was purely ambition, although the pretext was that the Britons were the aggressors by sending supplies to the hostile tribes of Gaul. Cæsar landed near Deal, and found a much more formidable opposition than he had expected, the natives displaying considerable military skill with the most determined courage. The Romans, indeed, gained some advantages; but Cæsar soon became sensible that the conquest of the island required a much greater force than had yet been brought against it, and was not to be achieved in a single campaign. The approach of winter in the country of an enemy whose spirit seemed to be roused to the most desperate resistance, gave him some alarm for the safety of his army; and, therefore, binding the conquered parts of the country

* "To yield to misfortunes, and bear them weakly, is miserable. By such infirmity of mind, many have brought ruin on their relations and friends, some even on their country, but more on themselves."

to terms of submission, he thought it prudent to re-embark his legions, and, after settling them in winter-quarters in Gaul, returned himself to Italy, to attend to the concerns of the capital, where the splendor of his foreign campaigns had highly increased his popularity.

His great acquisition of fame had now sensibly obscured the glory of Pompey, whose influence was visibly on the decline. To strengthen himself by the interest and by the talents of Cicero, whom he had before so meanly abandoned, he now procured the recall of that illustrious exile, and the repeal of the sentence of confiscation which had deprived him of his whole property. Cicero returned to his country after an absence of sixteen months. His journey from Brundisium to Rome was a triumphal procession. All Italy, as he said himself, seemed to flock together to hail his auspicious return; that single day made his glory immortal.* He was loaded with honors; and his houses and villas, which had been razed to the ground, were rebuilt with increased magnificence at the expense of the public.

By the influence of Cicero, Pompey regained for a while his popularity. The triumvirate, though secretly animated with mutual jealousy, still continued to support each other in their power. Pompey and Crassus were elected consuls; the former having, for five years, the government of Spain, and the latter that of Syria, Greece, and Egypt. They had unlimited power to levy troops, and to exact whatever pecuniary supplies they found necessary, from the tributary princes and states under their government. Crassus, insatiable in accumulating wealth, plundered the Eastern provinces without mercy; but having engaged in an inconsiderate expedition against the Parthians, he was totally defeated, his whole army cut to pieces, and he himself and his son were slain in the field.

Cesar in the meantime was prosecuting his military operations in Gaul, and seemed to take no concern in the affairs of Rome; yet, in reality, his influence there now regulated every measure of importance. His partisans, to whom he remitted large sums of money, overruled all proceedings in the comitia, and carried whatever measures of a public nature he chose to direct as instrumental to his own views. Pompey was not blind to these views; and the apparent union and cordiality which they yet affected to maintain was any thing but real. We shall soon see an open rupture, and a contention for undivided sovereignty, whose issue must decide the fate of the commonwealth.

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* "Meus quidem reditus is fuit, ut a Brundisio usque ad Romam agmen perpetuum totius Italiæ viderem. Unus ille dies mihi quidem instar immortalitatis fuit."

## CHAPTER II.

Cæsar passes the Rubicon—Marches to Rome—Named Dictator—Battle of Pharsalia—Flight and Death of Pompey—Defeat of Pharnaces—Death of Cato—Cæsar's Reforms in the Roman State—Reform of the Calendar—Is created perpetual Dictator with the title of Imperator—Character of Cæsar—Is assassinated—Artful conduct of Mark Antony—His ambitious views—Second Triumvirate—Bloody Proscription—Death of Cicero—Battle of Philippi, and End of the Republic—Battle of Actium—Death of Antony and Cleopatra—Octavius (afterwards Augustus) sole master of the Roman Empire.

The brilliancy of the warlike exploits of Cæsar, and the influence of his partisans in the public measures of the commonwealth, easily procured the prolongation of his government of the Gauls, to a period double the length of that for which it had been originally granted. In the course of ten years, he had reduced the greater part of what is now called France into a Roman province; a conquest, in which his political talents were no less signally displayed than his abilities as a general. His Commentaries, a military journal which contains a brief and perspicuous detail of his campaigns, are no less a proof of his excelling in those splendid features of a public character, than of his possessing all the qualities of a skilful and eloquent historian.

The renewed term of his government was on the eve of expiring; but this extraordinary man had no design of relinquishing his military command. To secure himself against a deprivation of power, he bribed Curio, one of the tribunes, to make a proposal which wore the appearance of great moderation, and regard for the public liberty. This was, that Cæsar and Pompey should either both continue in their governments—or both be recalled; as they were equally capable of endangering the safety of the commonwealth by an abuse of power. The motion passed, and Cæsar immediately offered to resign on condition that his rival should follow his example; but Pompey rejected the proposal, probably aware of the real designs of Cæsar, but too confidently relying on the strength of his own party, and the influence he had with his troops. A civil war was the necessary consequence. Every connection between these two ambitious men was now at an end. The death of Julia, the daughter of Cæsar, and wife of Pompey, dissolved that feeble bond of union which had hitherto subsisted between them.* They were now declared enemies, and each pre-

* This lady died in childbed. She was beloved by Pompey with the fondest

pared to assert, by arms, his title to an unrestrained dominion over his country. It is not a little surprising, that the citizens of Rome should deliberately prepare to sacrifice their lives and fortunes in the decision of such a contest, with all the zeal of men who fight for their most valuable rights and possessions.

Pompey had on his side the consuls and a great part of the senate. In one respect he had justice on his side, for the term of his government was not yet at an end, and the proposed accommodation was evidently a snare laid for him by Cæsar. Cato and Cicero had taken part with Pompey, which showed their sense of the justice of his cause, for they were no false patriots. But Cæsar had in his favor a victorious army of veteran troops, profound military skill, and a great portion of popularity gained by his general character of humanity, and well-employed largesses among all ranks of the people.

The boundary which separates Italy from Cisalpine Gaul is a small river named the Rubicon. The Roman senate, aware of the designs of Cæsar, had pronounced a decree, devoting to the infernal gods whatever general should presume to pass this boundary with an army, a legion, or even a single cohort.

Cæsar, who, with all his ambition, inherited a large share of the benevolent affections, did not resolve on the decisive step which he had now taken without some compunction of mind. Arrived with his army at the border of his province, he hesitated for some time, while he pictured to himself the inevitable miseries of that civil war, in which he was now preparing to unsheath the sword. "If I pass this small stream," said he, "in what calamities must I involve my country! Yet, if I do not, I myself am ruined." The latter consideration was too powerful. Ambition, too, presented allurements, which to a mind like Cæsar's were irresistible. He passed the boundary, and took possession of Ariminum, where he was joined by Mark Antony and Cassius. They were at that time *tribunes of the people*, and after endeavoring in vain to serve his interest at Rome, by strenuously opposing a decree of the senate, which required Cæsar to disband his army, now openly joined him in the field with a considerable body of their followers.

Rome was now in the utmost alarm and consternation. Cæsar had with him ten legions, while Pompey, to whom the city looked for protection, and whom the senate had invested with all authority to defend the republic, had, with unpardonable supineness, taken no measures to guard against a step of this kind, which he might well have apprehended from the daring genius of his rival. He now ordered in haste a general levy to be made over all Italy;

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affection; and thus, in the expressive words of Velleius Paterculus, *erat medium malè cohærentis inter Pompeium et Cæsarem concordiæ pignus*.—Lib. ii. c. 47.

but found to his mortification, that Cæsar had pre-occupied the most important places whence troops were to be drawn, and was daily joined by fresh reinforcements. His well-timed bounties, and that clemency which he showed on every success of his arms, and which was truly a part of his nature, had gained him the general favor. The circumstance of the two tribunes espousing his cause gave it a show of patriotism, and he now publicly proclaimed that his sole purpose in leaving his government was to vindicate the authority of *the people* thus injured in the persons of their magistrates.

Pompey was now sensible of his weakness. The voice of the public openly expressed an impatient desire for the arrival of Cæsar, who, on his part, was rapidly advancing to the gates of Rome, when Pompey quitted the city, followed by the consuls and the greater part of the senators. Unable to collect a sufficient force in Italy, he passed over into Epirus. The East had been the scene of his conquests, and thence he trusted that he would be supplied both with troops and treasure. Before sailing from Brundisium, he had declared that he would treat all those as enemies who did not follow him. Cæsar, with more wisdom, declared that he would esteem all those his friends who did not arm against him.

Cæsar, by immediately following Pompey, might, perhaps, have brought the war to a speedy termination: but, besides the want of transports for the conveyance of his army, he judged it hazardous to leave Italy defenceless against the lieutenants of Pompey, then in considerable force in the Province of Spain. His first objects, therefore, were the securing the seat of empire, and reducing the hostile army under Pompey's officers. After making his public entry into Rome, where he was received with the loudest acclamations, and possessing himself of the public treasury, he set out for Spain. Marseilles, which lay in his route, had declared for his rival, but leaving Trebonius to besiege it, he proceeded in his march to meet the lieutenants of Pompey, Afranius and Petreius. These he speedily subdued, and, compelling them to yield at discretion, sent them home to Rome to proclaim his clemency and moderation. In the space of forty days all Spain submitted to the arms of Cæsar, and he returned victorious to Rome, where, in his absence, he had been proclaimed dictator. In that quality, he presided at the annual election of the chief magistrates of the state, and was himself elected consul. He had now that legal title to act in the name of the republic, which he had hitherto wanted. If the power of an usurper is capable of being validated by the subsequent voluntary sanction of those over whom it is usurped, Cæsar had now that ratification.

Meantime Pompey was strenuously collecting forces in Greece, Macedonia, and Epirus. He likewise drew large supplies from the sovereigns of Asia, and had already mustered an army of five legions, with five hundred ships of war, under the command of

Bibulus. Cæsar embarked at Brundisium with an equal armament of five legions, and the two armies came in sight of each other near Dyrrachium, in Illyria. After one doubtful engagement, in which the advantage was rather on the side of Pompey, Cæsar led him on to Macedonia, where he had two additional legions under his lieutenant Calvinus. Pompey, who was easily elated with every appearance of success, flattered himself that this was a retreat upon the part of his enemy. He was, therefore, anxious to come up with him, and began to terminate the war by a general engagement. This was exactly what Cæsar wished. This important battle was fought in the field of Pharsalia. The army of Pompey amounted to forty-five thousand foot, and seven thousand horse, which was more than double that of his rival; and so confident of victory were the former, that they had adorned their tents with festoons of laurel and myrtle, and prepared a splendid banquet against their return from the battle. Vain and presumptuous preparations! Of this immense army, fifteen thousand were left dead on the field, and twenty-four thousand surrendered themselves prisoners of war, and cheerfully incorporated themselves into the army of the victor, whose loss, in all, did not exceed two hundred men. Cæsar found in the camp of Pompey, all his papers, containing the correspondence he carried on with the chief of his partisans at Rome. The vacillating and magnanimous chief committed them unopened to the flames, declaring that he wished rather to be feared who were his enemies, than to be obliged to punish them.

After this fatal engagement, Pompey experienced all the miseries of a fugitive. The last scenes of the life of this illustrious man afford a striking picture of the vicissitudes of fortune, and the instability of all human greatness. He passed the first night, after his defeat, in the solitary hut of a fisherman upon the seacoast. Thence he went on board a vessel, which landed him first at Amphipolis; whence he sailed to Lesbos, where his wife Cornelia was waiting, in anxious expectation, the issue of the late decisive conflict. They met upon the seashore. Pompey embraced her without uttering a word, and this silence spoke at once the whole extent of her misfortune. They fled for protection to Egypt, where Pompey expected to find a welcome asylum at the court of the young Ptolemy, whose father Auletes had owed to him his settlement upon the throne. But Ptolemy was then at war with his sister Cleopatra, to whom their father had jointly bequeathed the kingdom; and his ministers, apprehending that Pompey would take the part of Cleopatra, in order to enforce that settlement of which the Roman people were appointed the executors, immediately determined his destruction. The ship which carried Pompey and Cornelia had approached within sight of the land, and he despatched a messenger ashore desiring an audience of the Egyptian monarch. A single boat rowed off from the land, in which came some offi-

cers with orders to bring him on shore; and he parted with many tears from Cornelia, who was justly apprehensive of his safety, but could not foresee all the misery of his fate.

They were still in sight of the ship, and Pompey, who began to fear that he was betrayed, sought to ingratiate himself with those to whom he was now a prisoner. He reminded some of them of having served under his banners, when a few years before he was the conqueror of the East; but they, answering nothing, rowed on in gloomy silence till they reached the land. While Pompey rose to step on shore, he received the stroke of a dagger in his side, and, decently covering his face with his robe, resigned himself to his fate. They cut off his head, and cast his body naked upon the sand; where a faithful slave, who had attended him, stealing to the place during the silence of the night, made a small funeral pile from the fragments of a boat, and burnt the body, carrying the ashes to Cornelia. "Princeps Romani nominis imperio arbitrioque Egyptii mancipii jugulatus est. Hic post tres consulatus, et totidem triumphos, domitumque terrarum orbem, vitæ fuit exitus. In tantum in illo viro a se discordante fortuna, ut cui modò ad victoriam terra defuerat, deesset ad sepulturam."*

Cæsar, being told of the course which Pompey had steered, sailed directly to Alexandria. When informed of his fate, he could not restrain his tears; and when his murderers presented to him the head of that unhappy man, which they judged must have been to him a grateful spectacle, he turned aside with horror from the sight. He caused every honor to be paid to his memory, and from that time showed the utmost indulgence and even beneficence to the partisans of his unfortunate rival. Those men have a bad opinion of human nature, who ascribe this conduct altogether to a refined policy, and account Cæsar only the greater hypocrite, the more examples he showed of the milder virtues. An hypothesis so contrary to every rule of candid judgment, is contradicted by the whole tenor of this truly great man's life.

Ptolemy Auletes, the father of the present sovereign of Egypt, had named, as we before remarked, the Roman people as the executors of his testamentary settlement of the kingdom; and Cæsar, as acting in the name of the republic, now took on himself the right of deciding between the pretensions of Cleopatra and her brother. The charms of Cleopatra had probably their influence on this decision. Such, at least, was the allegation of the partisans of the young Ptolemy, who for several months main-

* "He, the noblest of the Roman name, fell by the orders of an Egyptian bondsman. Such was the miserable end of him who had thrice borne the dignity of consul, thrice been honored with a triumph, and been, in fact, the lord of the world. In him so great was the reverse of fortune, that he, who but lately found the earth too small for his conquests, could not now command enough to cover his remains."—Vell. Pater. ii. 25.

tained his cause by force of arms, and besieged Cæsar in the city of Alexandria. In this war the young Ptolemy was killed, and an accident happened of which the general consequences were more to be deplored; the greater part of the celebrated library of the Ptolemies was burnt to the ground.* The issue of the war would probably have been fatal to Cæsar, had he not received timely succors from Asia. Thus reinforced he brought the kingdom of Egypt under complete subjection, bestowing the sovereignty jointly on Cleopatra and a younger Ptolemy, a child of eleven years of age, the brother of the last prince.

He now turned his arms against Pharnaces, the son of Mithridates, who had seized the kingdom of Pontus, and meditated, after his father's example, to sweep the Romans of their Asiatic possessions. This war he very speedily terminated, intimating its issue to his friends at Rome in three words, *Veni, vidi, vici.*†

Thus having established order and tranquillity in the East, Cæsar returned to Rome, where he was elected consul for the ensuing year, and dictator, being the third time he had enjoyed both these dignities. Rome stood in need of his presence; for the troops which, under the command of Mark Antony, had remained in Italy, had spread universal disorder and anarchy. The partisans of his late rival were at the same time in arms in Africa, headed by Scipio and Cato, who, together with the sons of Pompey, had fled thither after the defeat of Pharsalia, and received cordial aid from Juba, king of Mauritania. Cæsar, therefore, found the chief obstacle to his ambition in this quarter, and embarking for Africa, was obliged for some time to act with the greatest caution, and avoid a general engagement, with an enemy whose effective forces greatly outnumbered his own. He gained, however, several advantages, and his high reputation, together with the prevailing opinion of that prosperous fortune which had hitherto attended all his enterprises, caused daily desertions to his standards from the ranks of his enemies. A favorable situation at length presenting itself, he engaged the allied army at Thapsus, and obtained a complete victory. Scipio perished in his passage to Spain. Cato alone remained, whose indomitable spirit no reverse of fortune was capable of forcing to yield to any terms of submission. With an undaunted resolution, he shut himself up in Utica with a few noble spirits, who, like himself, disdained to yield to the master of Rome. He formed the principal citizens into a senate, and for some time

* The royal library of Alexandria was said to consist of seven hundred thousand volumes: of these four hundred thousand, deposited in the quarter of the city called Bruchion, were destroyed on this occasion; the other part, containing three hundred thousand, was within the Serapeum, and escaped the flames; there it was that Cleopatra deposited the two hundred thousand volumes of the Pergamean library, given to her by Mark Antony. This was increased from age to age, till it was finally burnt by the caliph Omar, in A. D. 642.

† "I came, I saw, I conquered."

cherished the desperate purpose of holding out the town against the whole force which Cæsar could bring against it. But the spirits of his party were not equal to his own, and some of his friends venturing to hint a wish for a timely capitulation, Cato counselled them to provide as they judged best for their own safety. After supper, during which he conversed with his usual cheerfulness, he retired to his apartment, and for awhile occupied himself in perusing Plato's *Dialogue on the Immortality of the Soul*. He then composed himself to sleep, and after a short repose, inquiring whether his friends had saved themselves by flight, and being assured that all was well, he calmly fell upon his sword.

Juba was now driven from his kingdom, and Mauritania became a Roman province. The victorious Cæsar returned to Rome. The natural clemency of his disposition now signally displayed itself: he remembered no longer that there had been opposite parties, but showed the same humane indulgence to the friends of Pompey, as if they had never been his enemies. Many of them he raised to offices of dignity and emolument, and found them henceforward the most attached of his partisans. He was decreed a splendid triumph, and on that occasion gratified the people with the most magnificent games and entertainments. Master of the state, he from this time employed his whole attention in contributing to its prosperity and happiness. He turned his mind to the reformation of abuses of every kind. He repressed luxury by sumptuary laws; stimulated industry by rewards; and by sedulously promoting the comforts of the lower class of citizens, gave the most effectual encouragement to population. While he thus advanced the prosperity of the capital, he introduced order and economy into the government of the provinces, where hitherto every species of oppression and peculation had been permitted and countenanced.

The genius of Cæsar was not confined to the arts of government, but carried its researches into every branch of science and philosophy. The duration of the year at this time was twelve lunar months, with an intercalation of twenty-two or twenty-three days, alternately, at the end of every two years: but the pontiffs either introduced or omitted the intercalation according to circumstances, as they wanted to abridge or prolong the time of the magistrates' continuing in office—and thus there was the greatest confusion in the calendar. Cæsar, who was a proficient in astronomy, and to whose writings in that science even Ptolemy confesses that he owed information, corrected the errors of the calendar, by fixing the solar year at three hundred and sixty-five days, with an intercalation of one day every fourth year.*

* Romulus divided the year into ten months, which consisted of three hun-

The sons of Pompey, Cneius and Sextus, attempted to rekindle the war in Spain; but they were soon subdued by Cæsar in a decisive engagement at Munda. Returning from this expedition to Rome, he was hailed the Father of his Country, was created consul for ten years, and perpetual dictator. His person was declared *sacred*; as a symbol of which, he was allowed to wear constantly a circle of laurel, hitherto the temporary distinction of a triumphant general. In like manner the epithet of *imperator*, which was only occasionally bestowed on the commander of a victorious army, was now conferred on Cæsar as a perpetual title of honor, as he was invested for life with the power of chief commander of the whole armies of the state.

By these public acts and decrees of the Roman people, accumulating the most despotic powers of sovereignty in the person of an individual, the commonwealth of Rome had now voluntarily resigned its liberties. The ancient republican constitution was at an end: there were none who either had an interest or a desire to maintain it; for the passion for mainly independence, and the anxious vindication of their rights as free citizens, which in former times animated the great body of the people, and checked all inordinate ambition in individuals, had now given place to that selfish spirit which is content with the pleasures of luxury, and seeks the gratification of its narrow schemes of enjoyment by courting the favor of a sovereign or meanly flattering his passions. The Roman liberty, as Montesquieu has well observed, was not extinguished by the ambition of a Pompey or of a Cæsar. If the sentiments of Cæsar and Pompey had been the same with those of Cato, others would have cherished the same ambitious thoughts which they discovered: and since the republic was fated to fall, there never would have been wanting a hand to drag it to destruction.

Yet though the fall of a constitution is the necessary and un-

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dred and four days; but, Numa added two other months, January and February, which made his year to contain three hundred and fifty-four days. But this computation falling short of the space of a regular year by ten days and six hours nearly, occasioned every eighth year an interposition of three whole months, which they called the intercalary or leap year. The care of making this intercalation being left to the priests, they introduced or omitted a month whenever they pleased, till at last there was such disorder, that festivals came to be kept at a season quite different from that of their first institution. To remedy these abuses, Julius Cæsar added the odd ten days to Numa's year, and lest the odd six hours should create confusion, he ordered that every fourth year one whole day should be inserted, next after the twenty-third of February, or next before the sixth of the calends of March; for which reason the supernumerary day was called *dies* bis-sextus, and thence the leap year came to be called *annus* bis-sextilis. This is the Julian or Old Style. Yet because there wanted eleven minutes in the six odd hours of Julius's year, the equinoxes and solstices, losing something continually, were found, about the year 1584, to have run back ten whole days, for which reason Pope Gregory XIII. cut off ten days to bring them to their proper places, and this is called the Gregorian or New Style.

avoidable consequence of the decay of those principles by which it had originally been supported, men must reprobate the instrument of usurpation by which their ruin is finally accomplished. In this point of view the conduct of Cæsar cannot be vindicated on the score of right. He was an usurper; and had it been possible to restore the Roman liberty and the ancient fabric of the commonwealth by the extinction of the tyrant, an open and manly use of the sword for his destruction had been a meritorious and patriotic attempt. But here lay the delusion: it may be the fact, that those men who accomplished the death of Cæsar acted upon principles truly virtuous and patriotic; they did perhaps believe, that by his death, they would restore the liberty and ancient constitution of their country: but we must deplore the narrowness of their views who did not perceive that an internal principle of corruption had annihilated the one, and must have proceeded to extinguish the other, although Julius Cæsar had never been born. Even Cicero, whose political principles led him to approve of the death of Cæsar, candidly owns that the republic gained nothing by that event:—"Interfecto domino, liberi non sumus: non fuit dominus ille fugiendus: sublato enim tyranno, tyrannida manere video." *

The personal character, too, of this illustrious man has greatly contributed to increase the censure of those who conspired and accomplished his death; † but in impartial reasoning on the merit or demerit of this action, it is not equitable to allow force to such considerations.

The magnificent schemes of a public nature which Cæsar had formed would certainly have contributed both to his own glory and to the interest and happiness of the people whom he governed; and a just sense of these benefits was doubtless the principal

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* "The master is slain, but we are not the more free. It was not he who was to be dreaded. The tyrant is indeed removed, but the tyranny remains." Cic. ad Attic. xiv. 14.

† Julius Cæsar united in himself more of the advantages of mind and body, than perhaps, any of his contemporaries, and to these were added the splendor of ancestry. For he could trace his pedigree, on his mother's side, up to Ancus Martius; and the Julian family, of which he was the head, were generally believed to have descended from the Trojan Æneas. Velleius Paterculus thus shortly enumerates these striking characteristics of Cæsar:—"Hic nobilissima Juliorum genitus familia, et quod inter omnes antiquissimos constabat, ab Anchise et Venere deducens genus, forma omnium civium excellentissimus, vigore animi acerrimus, munificentia effusissimus, animo supra humanam et naturam et fidem erectus, magnitudine cogitationum, celeritate bellandi, patientia periculorum, magno illi Alexandro, sed sobrio nec iracundo, simillimus." Vell. Pat. ii. 41.

"Born of the most illustrious family of the Julii, and tracing his highest descent from Anchises and Venus, he excelled all his fellow citizens in the graces of his person, the vigor of his mind, and the splendor of his munificence; and that to a degree not only beyond human nature, but beyond human conception: in the magnitude of his designs, his promptitude in war, his indifference to danger, he was the equal of the great Alexander, but in command over himself far his superior."

cause of his popularity while alive, and of the splendid reputation which has attended his memory. He had proposed to collect, arrange, and methodize the laws of his country. He had employed the most learned men of his times to collect libraries for the public use. He had planned the most magnificent structures for the embellishment of the city, and the preservation of the public records. He projected the draining of the marshes of Italy, which rendered the whole country unwholesome; the deepening the bed of the Tiber, and the construction of a harbor at the mouth of that river capable of receiving the largest vessels both for war and merchandise. We have noticed the reforms which he introduced in the government of the provinces. He proposed to have a complete survey and geographical delineation made of the whole Roman empire. These were certainly schemes equally splendid and beneficial to the people. They create a just admiration of the character of Cæsar, and make us regret that blind and infatuated zeal which frustrated the accomplishment of those great designs, without giving in exchange for them any real or substantial good.

It was almost the only weakness of this truly great man, that, possessing the reality of sovereign power, he was not satisfied without obtaining likewise its external pageantry. To gratify this frivolous passion, the senate had decreed him the privilege of constantly wearing the triumphal robe, of having a gilded chair of state, and of taking the precedence of all the magistrates of the commonwealth. He was allowed a constant escort of knights and senators; his birthday was ordained to be solemnized as a festival through the whole empire, and a temple was built and priests appointed to offer sacrifice unto the Julian Jupiter. It was generally believed that he coveted a yet more dangerous distinction, and had determined that the title of KING, which, from the days of the last Tarquin, had been odious to every Roman ear, should be revived in his person. The report was current that a party of the senators had determined to crown him in public by that title on the ides of March. A conspiracy had been for some time formed, at the head of which were Marcus Brutus and Caius Cassius, whom Cæsar had placed on the list of prætors, and intrusted with the higher jurisdiction of the city —the former a man whom he had reason to believe most sincerely attached to him, as he had saved his life at the battle of Pharsalia, and given him numberless proofs of his affection. The conspirators determined to execute their purpose on that day which had been destined for bestowing on Cæsar the regal title. He had no sooner taken his place in the senate-house, than the conspirators, surrounding him, plunged their daggers into his body: he defended himself for some time, till seeing Brutus among the assassins, whom he had always distinguished by the epithet of his son, he resigned himself to his fate, and fell, pierced with twenty-three wounds, at the foot of Pompey's statue.

The conspirators had no sooner accomplished their purpose than they ran through the streets of the city, proclaiming aloud that the king of Rome was dead: but the effect did not answer their expectation. The people, almost to a man, seemed struck with horror at the deed. They loved Cæsar, master as he was of their lives and liberties. Mark Antony, who was consul, and Lepidus, the general of the horse, ambitious themselves of succeeding to the power of dictator, resolved to pave the way for it by avenging his death. The senate was convoked to determine whether the ordinances of the late dictator had the force of law:—that is to say, whether Cæsar was an usurper, or was invested with legal authority. It was a nice question, but it required an immediate determination. The senators were of opposite opinions. The party of the assassins was formidable, from the experience of what they had the courage to attempt: yet the extreme disorder that must have ensued from annulling all the laws and regulations of the dictator made it a thing impossible to be thought of in the present situation of affairs. The senate had recourse to an equivocal, and, in fact, a contradictory decree; which was, to confirm all the laws of Cæsar, and to declare at the same time that his murderers should not be prosecuted. But the latter part of this decree was evaded by the art of Antony, who determined to call forth the vengeance of the people upon the heads of those men whom he justly regarded as the chief obstacles to his own designs of ambition.

Cæsar had adopted Caius Octavius, the grandson of his sister Julia, and left him heir to the greatest part of his fortune. He had appointed several of the conspirators themselves for his tutors, and had bequeathed a large legacy to the people of Rome, to be divided among the whole of the citizens. These bequests redoubled the affection of the people, and they flocked to attend his obsequies, penetrated with the highest regard to his memory, and with the utmost indignation against his murderers. Mark Antony took advantage of these favorable dispositions. The body being laid on a couch of state in the *forum*, he mounted the consul's tribunal, and after reading the decree of the senate, which had conferred upon Cæsar even the honors due to a divinity, he entered into an enumeration of all his illustrious achievements for the glory and aggrandizement of the state: he then proceeded to recount the examples of his clemency, and heightened all his virtues with the most pathetic eloquence. "By these titles we have sworn that his person should be held sacred and inviolable; and here (said he) behold the force of our oaths." At these words he lifted up the robe which covered the body, and holding it out to the people, who melted into tears, he showed it all covered with blood, and pierced with the daggers of the conspirators. A general cry of vengeance was heard. The populace strove to increase the funeral pile, by throwing into it their most precious effects; while numbers

ran to destroy and set fire to the houses of the murderers. These at first fled to the capitol for safety; but finding their lives even there in the utmost hazard, prudently quitted the city, and sought shelter in the distant provinces.

The Consul Antony, by the steps he had hitherto taken, wanted only to sound the dispositions of the people. Finding these to his wish, he very soon began to discover his own views of ambition. He was possessed of the whole of the dictator's papers. He had received likewise from Calpurnia, the widow, all the treasures of Cæsar. Not content with these, he made a traffic of fabricating acts and deeds, to which he counterfeited the dictator's subscription, and availed himself of them as genuine. He next procured the senate, on pretence that his person and safety was in danger, to allow him a guard; and under that decree, he chose six thousand of the ablest veterans, whom he embodied and armed. Thus secured, he found himself absolute master in Rome. In all revolutions there are critical moments when all that is requisite to the attainment of the supreme power is the courage to assume it.

But the ambition of Antony was frustrated by the measures of a rival against whom he had not provided. The young Octavius arrived in Rome: and declaring himself the heir of Cæsar, found no other title necessary to gain the favor of the people,—a powerful standard to the ambitious plan he had secretly formed of succeeding to the full power of the dictator. Pursuing the same object with Antony, it was impossible they could long be on good terms. An open rupture ensued on account of the government of Cisalpine Gaul, which Antony, in opposition to the will of the dictator, who had decreed it to Decimus Brutus, endeavored to secure for himself. This province, from its vicinity to the capital, was always of prime importance to the ruler of the state.

Octavius on this occasion armed against him, in order to enforce the will of his adopted father. He had the address to persuade the senate into his views, and to inspire them with a dread of the ambition of his rival. But after some indecisive acts of hostility, Octavius and Antony, finding their parties very nearly balanced, judged it for the present to be their most prudent scheme to unite their interests, and to admit into their association Lepidus, who then enjoyed the government of Transalpine Gaul. Thus was formed the second triumvirate, the effects of whose union were beyond measure dreadful. Octavius, Mark Antony, and Lepidus held a conference in a small island in the middle of the river Po. They agreed that, under the title of Triumviri, they should possess themselves of absolute authority; and they made a partition on the spot of all the provinces, and divided between them the command of the legions. Lepidus had Gallia Narbonnensis and Spain; Antony had Cisalpine and Transalpine Gaul; Octavius contented himself with Africa, Sicily, and Sardinia. None of them

ventured to appropriate to himself Italy; because they affected to regard that country as the *communis patria*, which they were all equally bound to protect and defend. The eastern provinces were as yet possessed by Brutus and the other conspirators, against whom it was determined that Antony and Octavius should immediately march with a large army.

Before entering, however, upon this expedition, it was resolved to clear the way by a proscription of all that were obnoxious to any one of the triumviri: a dreadful resolution! since the fondest friends of any one of the three had necessarily been the enemies of the others. What souls must those men have possessed who could advise or consent to so horrible a scheme! Lepidus agreed to sacrifice his brother Paulus; Antony, his uncle Lucius Cæsar; Octavius, his guardian Tornanius, and his friend Cicero. The latter had been won by the flattery of Octavius, to espouse his interest by unmasking the ambitious design of Antony to succeed to the power of the dictator; on which occasion, Cicero pronounced his famous Philippics, in imitation of the orations of Demosthenes to rouse the spirit of the Greeks against the designs of the Macedonian tyrant. It was no wonder, then, that Antony should mark this illustrious man as a certain victim of his revenge.

Cicero, who had never been remarkable for strength of mind, showed more magnanimity on this occasion than he had ever before manifested. When informed that his name was included in the proscription, he yielded at first to the earnest persuasion of his friends to attempt to save himself by flight: but on being informed that the country was beset by his enemies, so as to leave no chance for his escape, he desired to be carried to one of his own villas. On perceiving the approach of a band of soldiers, who were commissioned to assassinate him, he ordered his litter to be stopped, beheld his murderers with a fixed regard, and stretched out his neck to the blow. A fragment of one of the lost books of Livy gives a striking description of this last scene in the life of Cicero. "After judiciously remarking, that amidst all the reverses of fortune which the great man had undergone, it was only on this last occasion that he displayed true magnanimity, the historian adds these words: *Si quis tamen virtutibus vitia pensârit, vir magnus, acer, memorabilis fuit, et in cujus laudes persequendas Ciceronē laudatore opus fuerit.** In this horrible proscription, 300 senators and 3,000 Roman knights were put to death in cold blood.

Satiated, at length, with murder, the triumvirate prepared for their expedition against the conspirators. Lepidus remained in Rome, while Antony and Octavius marched against Brutus and Cassius, then in Macedonia. No Roman armies had ever been

* "But weighing his great qualities with his failings, he was a great and most able man, to do justice to whose praises would require a second Cicero."

seen equal in number to those which were now to decide the fate of the world. Each party led into the field above 100,000 men. They met near the town of Philippi, on the confines of Macedonia. This decisive battle was fought on both sides with the most desperate courage. Brutus was victorious at the head of that division which he commanded; but too rashly pursuing his success, he separated himself from the main body of the army, which in the meantime was vigorously attacked by Antony, and entirely broken. Cassius, ignorant of what had become of Brutus, and believing that all was lost, obliged one of his own freedmen to put him to death. The plan of Brutus, who had come off in safety with a large body of men, was evidently now to avoid a second engagement: but his troops, flushed with their individual success, forced him to come to action, and he was totally defeated. Convinced that the chances of success were now irretrievably gone, and well-assured of the fate he had to expect from the conquerors, he chose to deprive his enemies at least of one victim, and, falling on his sword, he died the death of his friend Cassius.

Octavius appears in this decisive action to have behaved in no heroic manner. It was even asserted that he chose to post himself among the baggage in the rear, during the whole time of the engagement; and such a report, even if we suppose it a falsehood, is, at least, a proof that he had not the reputation of valor. Mark Antony had real courage, and after victory displayed that generosity which is ever its attendant: while the former exhibited a cruelty of nature which is the inseparable companion of cowardice. He caused the most distinguished of the prisoners to be slaughtered before his eyes, and even insulted them in the agonies of death.

The Triumvirs were obliged to gratify their troops with very high rewards. To furnish a supply for that necessary purpose, Antony went into Asia, where he levied the most exorbitant contributions from the tributary states. While in Cilicia, he summoned Cleopatra, who, by assassinating her brother, had secured to herself the undivided sovereignty of Egypt, to appear before him, and answer for her conduct in allowing Serapion, her lieutenant in the isle of Cyprus, to send succors to Cassius. The queen came to Tarsus. Her beauty, the splendor of her suite and equipage, and the artful allurements of her manners, made a complete conquest of the triumvir. He forgot glory, ambition, fame, and every thing for Cleopatra. Octavius, meantime, thought of nothing but his own interest and exaltation, to which he regarded the infatuation of Antony as a most happy preparative.

The younger Pompey had taken possession of Sicily, of Sardinia, and Corsica. Octavius now turned his attention to this quarter; but incapable himself of commanding in a military expedition, he employed Marcus Agrippa, a man of uncommon talents, whom he had raised from obscurity to the consulship; and who

very speedily compelled Pompey to evacuate Sicily and all his other possessions, and fly into Asia, where he was put to death by the lieutenants of Antony.

Octavius now determined to rid himself of the partners of his power. Lepidus, a man of an indolent character and no talent, had already lost all credit, even with his own troops. The legions under his command, won by the bribes and promises of Octavius, deserted their general, who, sensible of his own insufficiency, sought permission to retire to Circæum, on the Latian coast, where he passed the remainder of his life in quiet obscurity. It has been well remarked of this man, who for some time sustained a high part in the political drama of the times, that he had neither those virtues nor those vices for which the names of men are transmitted with distinction to posterity.

Antony, in the meantime, intoxicated with Eastern luxury and debauchery, was daily sinking in the esteem of his army. In the madness of his passion for Cleopatra, he had proclaimed her queen of Egypt, Cyprus, Africa, and Cœlo-Syria; and invested kingdoms and provinces on the children that were the fruit of her various amours. These shameless proceedings reflected dishonor on the Roman name, and deprived him of the esteem of his best friends; and the imprudent measure he now took in divorcing his wife Octavia, the sister of his colleague, was a justifiable cause for their coming to an open rupture, and appealing to the sword to decide their claim to undivided sovereignty of the empire. Octavius had foreseen this issue, and made formidable preparations, which Antony had supinely neglected. He trusted chiefly to his fleet, and was persuaded by Cleopatra to rest the fortune of the war on a naval engagement, which was fought near Actium in Epirus. In the heat of the battle, which was maintained for some time with equal spirit, Cleopatra, with her Egyptian armament of sixty galleys, took to flight; and what is scarcely conceivable, such was the infatuation of Antony, that he followed her, leaving his fleet to fight for themselves. After a contest of some hours, they yielded to the squadron of Octavius. The army of Antony, which had witnessed this engagement from the land, held out for a few days, in hopes of the return of their commander, but at length seeing their expectation vain, they surrendered to the victor.

The flight of Cleopatra had been attributed by Antony to female timidity; but her subsequent conduct gave full reason to believe it shameful treachery. Octavius pursued the fugitives to Egypt, where Antony, in desperate infatuation, gave himself up entirely to riot and debauchery, still blind to the treacherous character of his paramour, who, in the meantime, was carrying on a secret negotiation with Octavius, on whom she vainly imagined that her personal charms might have such influence as to procure her association in the supreme power and government of the Ro-

man empire. In this view she surrendered to him the sovereignty of Egypt, which, without positively assenting to her terms, Octavius gave her reason to believe that he was not disinclined to an accommodation that would gratify her utmost ambition.

Meantime Octavius advancing with his army to besiege Pelusium, its governor, instructed by Cleopatra, surrendered the city at discretion, and this event was followed by the surrender of the Egyptian fleet. The eyes of Antony were at length opened. He plainly saw that he was betrayed. A report which Cleopatra caused to be spread, that she had put an end to her life, hastened the fate of her injured lover, who died by his own hand; and Cleopatra, soon after, discovering that all arts were lost upon Octavius, who had determined to treat her as a captive, now executed in reality what she had before feigned, and put herself to death by the poison of an asp.

Octavius returned to Italy, sole master of the Roman Empire. He owed his elevation to no manly virtue or heroism of character. A concurrence of happy circumstances, the adoption of the great Julius, the weakness of Lepidus, the folly and infatuation of Antony, the treachery of Cleopatra, and, above all, his own address and artifice, were the instruments of his fortune.

At this remarkable period, the end of the Commonwealth of Rome, it may be well to suspend for a while our historical narrative, and interpose some brief observations on the general character of Roman education: the state of literature at this period; the predominant tastes and passions of this remarkable people; and the system of their military art.

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## CHAPTER III.

On the Genius and National Character of the Romans—System of Roman Education—Progress of Literature—The Drama—Historians—Poets.

In the present chapter, we are to attend to those particular circumstances which appear most peculiarly to mark the genius, and to have formed the national character of the Romans.

A virtuous but rigid severity of manners was the characteristic of the Romans under their kings, and during the first ages of the republic. The private life of the citizens was frugal, temperate, and laborious, and it reflected its influence on their public charac-

ter. The children imbibed from their infancy the highest veneration for their parents, who, from the extent of the paternal power among the Romans, had an unlimited authority over their wives, their offspring, and their slaves. It is far from natural to the human mind that the possession of power and authority should form a tyrannical disposition. Where that authority, indeed, has been usurped by violence, its possessor may, perhaps, be tempted to maintain it by tyranny; but where it is either a right dictated by nature, or the easy effect of circumstances and situation, the very consciousness of authority is apt to inspire a beneficence and humanity in the manner of exercising it. Thus we find the ancient Romans, although absolute sovereigns in their families, with the *jus vitæ et necis*, the *right of life and death* over their children, and their slaves, were yet excellent husbands, kind and affectionate parents, humane and indulgent masters. Nor was it until luxury had corrupted the virtuous simplicity of the ancient manners, that this paternal authority, degenerating into tyrannical abuses, required to be abridged in its power, and restrained in its exercise by the enactment of laws.

By an apparent contradiction, so long as the paternal authority was absolute, the slaves and children were happy: when it became weakened and abridged, then it was that its terrors were, from the excessive corruption of manners, most severely felt. Even, however, under the first emperors, the Patria Potestas remained in its full force, and the custom of the *patres-familias* sitting at meals with their slaves and children, showed that there still remained some venerable traces of that ancient and virtuous simplicity.*

Plutarch, in his comparison between Numa and Lycurgus, has bestowed a severe censure on the Roman lawgiver, for his neglecting to establish a system, or to institute any fixed rules for the education of the Roman youth. But the truth is, that although the *laws* prescribed no such system, or general plan of discipline, like those of Sparta, yet there never existed a people who bestowed more attention on the education of their youth. In the dialogue, *De Oratoribus*,† attributed by some authors to Tacitus, by others to Quintilian, there is a fine passage which shows in a remarkable manner that extreme care bestowed, even in the earliest infancy, to form the manners and disposition of the Roman children. From this passage we learn, that in the earlier ages of the Roman commonwealth, such was that anxious care bestowed on their children by the Roman matrons,—such that jealousy of their receiving any of their earliest impressions from slaves or domestics,—that they

* "O noctes cœnæque Deûm, quibus ipse, meique
Ante Larem proprium vescor, vernasque procaces
Pasco libatis dapibus prout cuique libido est."
HORACE.

† Dialogus de Oratoribus, cap. xxviii. "Jampridem suus cuique filius," &c.

not only educated their own children, but accounted it an honorable employment to superintend and assist in educating the children of their relations.

Nor was this task of the mother confined only to the years of infancy and boyhood: it extended its influence to the more advanced periods of youth. At a much later period of the Roman history, we are informed by Tacitus, in his Life of Agricola, that this remarkable man had begun in his youth to pursue too ardently the study of philosophy, but that he was checked by the prudent remonstrances of his mother.*

To inspire that severe and rigid *virtue* which can alone support a democratic form of government, and to inculcate that exclusive love of our country, before which, in their early ages, every private or personal feeling was constrained to bow, was the first and most sacred duty of these noble matrons. The circumstances in which the commonwealth was situated in its earlier ages made this absolutely necessary. It possessed none of those artificial modes of defence so generally employed by the modern nations. The improvements of modern warfare, which substitute skill so often in the place of valor,—the fortifications of our modern cities, which render them, in some measure, independent of the personal exertions of those who defend them,—had not been introduced amongst this virtuous people. Those refinements, also, in the arts and manufactures which exchange the little enjoyments of private comfort for the higher feelings of public happiness, and even that progress in the sciences, which, however excellent in its general consequences, encourages certainly a spirit of exclusion most uncongenial to public exertion,—all these were either unknown or despised in the severer ages of the Roman republic.

Next to this care of the mother, or the female tutor, in instilling the rigid principle of patriotic virtue, a very remarkable degree of attention appears to have been bestowed by the Romans in accustoming their children to correctness of language and purity of expression. Cicero informs us that the Gracchi were educated *non tam in gremio quam in sermone matris*. And in speaking of Curio, who was one of the best orators of his time, he adds, that without possessing the rules of his art, and without any knowledge of the laws, he had attained to eminence † merely from the elegance and purity of his diction.

This attention to the language of children may appear, in these modern days, an absurd and useless refinement. Among the Romans it was not thought so. They were well aware how much

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* "Memoria teneo solitum ipsum narrare, se in prima juventâ studium philosophiæ ac juris ultra quam concessum Romano ac Senatori hausisse, in prudentia matris incensum ac flagrantem animum coercuisset." — *Tacitus Agric. Vit.*, c. iv.

† In Libro de Claris Oratoribus. Al. edit., folio, vol. ii. p. 257.

the man is influenced by the earliest impressions and habits of infancy. They suspected, and not without just grounds, that they who became familiar with the language and expressions of their slaves, were likely to be initiated also in their vices, and to become reconciled to their ideas of servility and dependence. That *urbanity* upon which this people so much prided themselves in the more advanced periods of the commonwealth, was nothing else than a certain manly elegance which distinguished the Roman citizens from those nations whom they accounted barbarous. This elegance was particularly evinced in their speech and gestures, and it was one of their first objects to form their youth with those qualities in which they most piqued themselves in excelling. To accustom a child to speak in a manly manner is, in fact, no unlikely method of teaching him to act so.* But this attention to the language of their youth had another source among the Romans. It was by the art of eloquence, by the power which that talent gave them over the minds of the people, and the influence which it possessed in the open deliberations of the popular assemblies, that the young Romans could alone rise to eminence, to office, and to dignity. History is full of examples of men who, by their excellence in this talent alone, had risen from the lowest condition amongst the plebeians, to the highest ranks in the state. To instil, therefore, at an early age, the elements of elocution, and to habituate the youth to those studies properly called *forensic*, was one great object of the Roman education. As an exercise of memory, the children were taught to repeat the laws of the XII Tables, and they were accustomed very early to plead fictitious causes. Plutarch tells us, in his life of the younger Cato, that, among the sports or plays of the Roman children, one was that of pleading causes before a mock tribunal, and accusing and defending a criminal in all the accustomed forms of judicial procedure.

The exercises of the body were likewise particularly attended to. Wrestling, running, boxing, swimming, using the bow and javelin, managing the horse, and, in short, whatever might harden the body and increase its strength and activity, were all reckoned necessary parts of education. Most of these warlike exercises were practised daily in the Campus Martius. The elder Cato not only instructed his son in grammar, and in the study of the law, but taught him also all these athletic accomplishments.

At the age of seventeen, which was the period when the young Roman assumed the *toga virilis*, the youth was committed by his father to the care of one of the masters or public professors of rhetoric, whom he attended constantly to the forum, and there employed himself in taking notes from the speakers, of whose harangues he afterwards gave an account to his preceptor.

* "Talis hominibus oratio qualis vita." *Seneca* Epist. 114.

It must not appear extraordinary that this mode of education should have been common to all the young patricians, whatever their inclinations led them to the camp or to the bar; for as every citizen of Rome was a branch of its aggressive system, the profession of arms became no apology for the want of that ability of maintaining the rights of the state in the assemblies of the people, which was equally necessary with the capacity of defending them in the field. If a public officer was accused, it was reckoned shameful if he could not himself give an account of his conduct, and plead his own cause. A senator who could not support his opinion by the ingenuity of argument or force of eloquence, was an object of contempt to the people. "Parum fuit in senatu brevem sonare, nisi qui ingenio et eloquentia sententiam suam tueretur; dicendi habiti, pulchram et gloriosam, sed contra mutam et elinguem vitam deforme habebatur." But it was not alone the cultivation of eloquence which was esteemed a necessary part of education. It was reckoned dishonorable for any person of the patrician rank not to have thoroughly studied the laws and the constitution of his country. In one of the laws of the Roman pandects, an anecdote is recorded of Sulpitius, a gentleman of the patrician order, who had occasion to resort for advice to Quintus Mucius Scævola, then the most eminent lawyer in Rome. Though otherwise an accomplished orator, Sulpitius had neglected the study of the law, and, from ignorance of the technical terms, he did not comprehend the meaning of Scævola's opinion: upon which he received from the lawyer this memorable reproof, "that it was a shame for a patrician, a nobleman, and an orator, to be ignorant of that law in which he was so particularly concerned." Sulpitius felt the reproach, and applied himself to the study of jurisprudence, in which he became so eminent as, in Cicero's opinion, to excel Scævola himself.*

To be an accomplished gentleman, therefore, it was necessary among the Romans to be an accomplished lawyer and orator; and what were the requisites for attaining eminence in those departments, we may learn from the writings of Cicero, Quintilian, and the younger Pliny. The pains those illustrious men bestowed to arrive at that excellence which distinguished them, appear almost incredible to those bred up in the less laborious efforts of modern literature. Pliny, in speaking of his public orations, which he always committed to writing, describes thus the labor of their revision:—"Nullum emendandi genus omitto; ac primum quæ scripsi mecum ipse pertracto; deinde duobus aut tribus lego, mox aliis trado adnotanda, notasque eorum si dubito cum uno rursus aut altero pensito; novissimè pluribus recito; ac si quid mihi credis acerrime emendo; cogito quam sit magnum dare aliquid in manus

* Digest. lib. i. tit. ii. sec. 43.

hominum, nec pro... re ac... possum non et cum multis et sæpe tractandum quod placere et semper et omnibus cupias.*

Such were the pains bestowed by Pliny to attain the character of an accomplished writer,—a degree of industry, however, for which he does not seem to claim any extraordinary merit as for a labor uncommon amongst the authors of his time. On the contrary, the same author, speaking of the studies of his uncle the elder Pliny, modestly styles himself an indolent man, when compared to that prodigy of industry and application, with the manner of whose singular life we shall become more minutely acquainted when treating of the state of *philosophy* among the Romans.

When an attention to rhetoric and the art of composition was thus once introduced, the progress of general literature in the Roman republic was singularly rapid; and it may here be made an object of pleasing as well as of useful investigation, to attempt a brief delineation of the progress of literature amongst this remarkable people, from its earliest stages to its highest advancement, shortly remarking, as we proceed, that peculiar genius and character of the principal authors who have become distinguished under its different eras. Superficial, certainly, and imperfect every account of this kind must be, from that brevity which the nature of our plan demands.

The poetical spirit appears almost coeval with the very rudest condition of society. Other branches of human knowledge which have arisen in the gradual progress of improvement, have owed their origin to the wandering and adventurous spirit of the species, or to the wants and sufferings of mankind; but poetry seems to have been created with man, and is contemporaneous with his language; and what is more remarkable, it is in this early age that poetry often assumes its highest character, and arrives at its greatest perfection.

*Language*, in the early periods of every nation, is in a very rude condition, and it is in this imperfection and apparent barrenness of the language that we shall find one cause for the lofty tone assumed by the poetry. The words are few but they are invariably expressive. They are descriptive of the strongest passions, of the deepest feelings of the human heart—of patriotism and valor, of grief and joy, of triumph and despair, of love and hatred;—of such feelings as are to be found amongst every uncultivated people—when nature is certainly comparatively in a savage state; but

* I neglect no possible mode of correction and emendation; and in the first place, after I have written an oration, I carefully revise it by myself; I then read it over to two or three friends; afterwards I submit it to others for their annotations, and if I doubt the justice of their criticisms, I canvass them with each; lastly, I recite the oration to a large assembly of my friends; and believe, even after this, I carefully reconsider and revise it. I hold it no light matter to come before the public, nor can I persuade myself that less pains are requisite on the part of an orator who aims at general and lasting approbation."

when none of those fantastic and artificial ideas, and therefore none of those low and insipid expressions have been introduced, which invariably accompany the process of luxury and refinement. In the ancient languages of a rude people we find no redundancy of expletives, no unnecessary words, no unmeaning synonymes; because language is formed to describe what passes in the minds, or before the eyes of those who use it. Even in their common discourse, and still more in their war-songs, or their solemn harangues, the speakers were actually compelled to be nervous, concise, and frequently metaphorical. The high-flown and figurative style must have then become as much a matter of necessity, owing to the barrenness of the language, as the effect of taste or imagination. When man first found himself in society, the Almighty, in the language which he created for him, did not furnish him with what was calculated to delineate the minuter feelings of the heart, or the more detailed and delicate scenery of nature; but with that broad and bolder pencil which could discriminate those conflicting passions which then tore his mind, or those awful solitudes with which he was then surrounded.

In the infancy of any people, and consequently in the infancy of their language, we must also recollect that there are none of those arbitrary rules of composition which the progress of literature has introduced. The effect of these is often to trammel the flights of genius, and often to shelter the efforts of mediocrity. Those in the commencement of moderate genius, or comparatively lower talents, are encouraged to intrude their minor efforts into notice, whilst the retired spirits, whose genius and talents fit them for a higher course, will not stoop to such unequal competition.

There is yet one other cause of the excellence of early poetry, which, before proceeding to that of the Romans, we may very briefly notice: I mean that which is generally to be found in the character and habits of the poet himself, and in the circumstance of their poems having been addressed to the whole body of the people. A moment's reflection will show that these two circumstances must, in a great measure, form the style of the national poetry, and, of course, regulate the tone of the national taste.

In reading the Agamemnon of Æschylus, who is there that will not discover that he is perusing the poetry of a warrior, who felt in the memory of the battles in which he has fought, the full force of his own energetic descriptions, who lived in the midst of the scenery which he paints from, and who addressed himself not to any particular set of men who regulated the public taste, not to the senate, to the academy, or to the camp alone, but directed his efforts to the great body of the Athenian people, from whose feelings, and whose taste, he looked for his proudest and most lasting applause. When we dwell with enthusiasm on the sublimity

of the Scandinavian sagas, or the eloquence of the North American warriors, we are tracing the very same effects produced by the same causes above enumerated. The poets lived and wrote in the midst of that sublime scenery from which they drew their noblest pictures: they were themselves free, and they felt deeply the passions which agitate the mind in the ruder periods of society, and they addressed their equals in the body of the people, who knew well how to distinguish their errors, and appreciate their success.

The history of this delightful art, in ancient as well as in more modern times, will, as we trace its future progress, be found to exemplify in a striking manner the truth of those remarks. Among all nations, as has been said, the first dawning of the literary spirit is shown in poetical composition. The Roman warrior, like the Indian, or the Gothic, had his war-songs, which celebrated his sagacity in council and his triumphs in the field. But none of these relics of the first Roman poetry have reached our days. After the establishment of a closer political union, and the introduction of a national religion, if the nation subsists, as in the early ages of Rome, by agriculture, their poetry assumes a new character. The verses in praise of the gods, whom they believed to preside over the year, and to regulate the fruitfulness of the seasons, and the rude but joyful songs which commemorated the close of the harvest, were examples of this second style. These last are particularly mentioned by Livy under the name of the Versus Fescennini, which were sung alternately by the laborers, and which were composed in a strain of rude and mirthful poetry, but not unsparingly tinged with ribaldry and licentiousness.

About the 390th year of Rome, the city had been reduced to extreme distress by a pestilence, and an uncommon method was adopted to appease the wrath of the gods, in sending into Etruria for drolls or stage-dancers. The dances of these Etrurians, according to Livy, were not ungraceful, and the Roman youth readily learned to imitate their performances, adding to them their own fescennine ballads, which they recited to the sound of music with appropriate gestures. Here evidently was the first rise of dramatic performances amongst the Romans; but, as yet, all was rude and imperfect, and they were altogether ignorant of the regular structure of a dramatic composition. This they acquired the first idea of from the Greeks. Euripides and Sophocles had flourished nearly 160 years, and Menander above 50 years, before this period. The dramatic poem was, at this time, in the highest celebrity in Greece, and was at length, about the year of Rome 514, introduced into that commonwealth by Livius Andronicus, a Greek slave.

To Livius Andronicus, whose compositions, in the judgment of Cicero, did not merit a second perusal, succeeded Nævius and

Ennius.* Nævius, probably, only imitated and improved upon the rude compositions of Andronicus; but *Ennius* was the first who, as Lucretius tells us, deserved a lasting crown from the Muses:—

"——Ennius qui primus amœno
Detulit ex Helicone perenni fronde coronam." †

The fragments of Ennius which have come down to our time illustrate strongly the observations which we have above made on the character of the early poetical productions of most rude nations. His poetry is bold and energetic; his sentiments often noble; his diction careless but vigorous; his versification rude and imperfect; he trusted to his genius for his future fame, and left the niceties of art and versification to his more polished descendants. One of these has finely drawn his character in a single line:—

"Ennius *ingenio* maximus, *arte* rudis."
*Ovid. Trist.* book ii. v. 452.

From the time of Ennius, dramatic poetry made a rapid advancement: for the intercourse with Greece, after the Punic wars, had an almost immediate effect in promoting the literary spirit, which first evinced itself in the improvement of the drama.

"Post Punica bella quietus quærere cepit,
Quid Sophocles et Thespis et Æschylus utile ferrent."

Then arose *Plautus*, the first who may be said to have proposed to himself nature as his model, but nature in so low and coarse an aspect as to make us feel often more disgusted than delighted with the vulgar fidelity of his pictures. It is, indeed, something like a profanation of the name of nature, to believe that those authors who have studied in the very lowest school of vice and

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* Ennius was a genius of very uncommon powers from nature, and these he had improved by an intimate acquaintance with Greek literature. He composed, in hexameter verse, the Annals of the Punic War; a poem on Scipio; a book of Epigrams or Inscriptions; and above forty dramatic pieces in Iambic verse; of all these, nothing but a few fragments remain. Like most original geniuses, he was abundantly conscious of his own merits, as appears from the inscription he composed for a statue of himself:—

"Aspice O cives senis Ennii imaginis formam.
Hic vestrum panxit maxima facta patrum.
Nemo me lacrimis decoret, neque funera fletu.
Faxit. cur.? volito vivu per ora virûm."

The following picturesque description of the dead of night, by Ennius, is the production of a sublime imagination:—

"Mundus cœli vastus constitit silentio.
Ex Neptunus sævus undis asperis pausam detit
Sol equis iter repressit ungulis volantibus;
Consistere amnes perennes, arbores vento vacant."

There are many beautiful single lines to be found scattered amongst the fragments which have reached our time, but few perfect passages.

† "Ennius, who robbed the Heliconian fount
Of the first bays to deck his honored front."

profligacy, who have copied human manners in their most degraded condition, have had nature for their model. These observations are particularly applicable to the dramatic works of Plautus, who has described nature not as she really was, but as transfigured by the vice and impurity of man. The general Latinity of Plautus is nervous and concise. It is pure, it is sometimes, perhaps, elegant, when we understand purity as opposition to the being florid or figurative; but it is too crowded with Graecisms, and the wit is too coarse and licentious, not to reflect somewhat of the same character on the style.

It is unfortunate that we have no remains of the dramatic works of Cæcilius, an author who improved so highly on the comedy of Plautus, that Cicero declares him perhaps the best of the comic writers.

Terence made his first appearance when Cæcilius was at the height of his reputation. It is said that, when he offered his first play to the Ædiles, they sent him with it to Cæcilius for his judgment of the piece. Cæcilius was then at supper; and as the young bard was very meanly dressed, he was had to sit behind on a low stool, and to read his composition. Scarcely, however, had he read a few sentences, when Cæcilius desired him to approach, and placed him at the table next to himself. His reputation arose at once to such a height, that his "Eunuchus," on its first appearance, was publicly performed twice each day.*

There is in the comedy of Terence a tone of truth and nature which distinguishes all its parts. It is discernible in the general simplicity of the plot, in the feelings and sentiments of his characters, in the perfect purity and familiar elegance of his language. But what Terence wanted was that strong command of ludicrous imagery, that *vis comica*, or comic energy, which is frequently to be traced in Plautus.

There were four different species of comedy among the Romans:—the *Comœdia Togata*, or *Prætextata*; the *Comœdia Tabernaria*; the *Atellana*; and the *Mimi*. The Togata or Prætextata admitted serious personages, and was probably of the nature of the modern sentimental comedy. The comedies of Terence may probably be numbered in this class. The Comœdia Tabernaria was a representation of ordinary life, and had nothing of dignity in its composition, though it did not descend to buffoonery. The Comœdiæ Atellanæ were pieces which were not committed to writing. The actors had the outlines of the comedy prescribed to them, and the subject of the different scenes; but they filled

* Terence was contemporary with Scipio and Lælius, and is said to have owed a great deal to their conversation and critical advice. Nay, Cicero tells us that it was rumored that some of these comedies which pass under the name of Terence were actually written by Scipio and Lælius, particularly the Heauton-Timroumenos, and the Adelphi.

up the dialogue from their own imaginations, in the same manner as in the pieces of Italian comedy performed at Paris in the last century. This species of representation, as it required more true genius in the actor than any other department of dramatic performance, was appropriated to the higher classes of the Roman youth, who would not permit the ordinary comedians to attempt it.

The Mimi have been particularly described in an earlier part of this work, in treating of the state of the dramatic art amongst the Greeks. They consisted of pieces of comedy of the very lowest species, more properly farces or entertainments of buffoonery, from which all dignity, and not unfrequently all decorum was banished; yet as the desire of variety in the compositions of art will excite to new experiments, we find the Roman actors would, in the middle of the performance of a mimus, surprise and delight their audience by some unexpected stroke of the pathetic. The Roman tragedy had arrived, we are informed by some authors, at a very high pitch of excellence, more particularly in the works of Attius and Pacuvius. Of these, unfortunately, not a vestige has been preserved, and all of this species of poetry which have reached our time are very indifferent indeed, and published under the name of Seneca.

We see from this short review of the origin of literature amongst the Romans, that its earliest efforts were exclusively confined to dramatic composition.* The Romans, in a word, borrowed their literature from Greece, and first attempted the species of literature then most popular in Greece; if, indeed, their Plautus and Terence, and the rest, did more than translate or adapt the then most popular pieces of the Greek stage. It was not until the golden age of Augustus, that, by the revolutions which then took place in the public taste, the other high departments of literature were introduced at Rome. It has been observed by Paterculus, that

* Some of the Roman actors were men of the most respectable character. Æsopus was the Garrick of Rome, and enjoyed, like him, the countenance and friendship of the most respectable men of his country. He excelled in tragedy, and was in this department the most celebrated actor that had ever appeared on the Roman stage. Cicero [illegible] the advantages of his friendship and talents, during his exile. He [illegible] being concerned in a part wherein there were several passages that might be applied to Cicero's misfortunes, this excellent tragedian [illegible] them with so peculiar and affecting an emphasis that the whole audience immediately took up the allusion, and it had a better effect, as Cicero himself acknowledges, than any thing his own eloquence could have expressed for the same purpose. But it is not in this instance alone that Cicero was obliged to Æsopus, as it was by the advantage of his precepts and example that he laid the foundation of his oratorical fame, and improved himself in the art of elocution. The high value which the Romans set upon the talents of this pathetic actor appears by the immense estate which he acquired in his profession: he died worth nearly 200,000*l*. He left a son behind him, whose remarkable extravagance is recorded by Horace, Sat. 3. b. ii. v. 239.

the era of the perfection of Roman literature was the age of Cicero, but this he extends to take in all those authors of the preceding age whom Cicero might have seen, and all the succeeding period who might have seen him. But the era of the highest literary splendor amongst the Romans was, in truth, not of such long duration. It continued above a century. We shall take a brief review of the most celebrated both of the prose and poetic writers, beginning with the former.

Pliny, Cicero, and Quintilian have all spoken in very high terms of the writings of the elder Cato. His principal works were historical, but of these nothing remains. Many of his fragments, however, have come down to us, and of these the most entire are some parts of his treatise *De Re Rustică*, in which he was imitated by Varro, one of the earliest of the good writers amongst the Romans.

The works of Varro were extremely voluminous. They consisted of many treatises on subjects of morals, politics, and natural history; of these, only his books De Re Rustica have reached the present time, and these are chiefly valuable, not for any particular merit attaching either to the style or to the composition, but for their curious and accurate details on the subject of Roman agriculture.*

Amongst the most eminent prose writers, Sallust, in point of time, comes next to Varro. As to the matter of his writings, they have been, both by his own age and by the judgment of the present day, declared excellent. There is to be discerned in them a depth of judgment, a shrewdness of remark resulting from his accurate knowledge of human nature, and an admirable talent for the delineation of character, which are all qualifications eminently requisite in a good historian. But in regard to the manner adopted in his works, it is impossible to speak favorably. In his anxiety to imitate the energetic brevity of Thucydides, he has fallen into an overstrained conciseness of expression, an affectation of uncommon idioms, and a studied adoption of antiquated phraseology, which render his style frequently obscure, and always unnatural. This is the more unpardonable, as he lived in those times in which the Roman language was in its highest purity. All imitations in style are objectionable, and indicate a servility and littleness of mind rarely found united to real talent. But to imitate in one language the peculiar idiom or particular style of any favorite author who writes in another, is of all imitations the most unnatural, and the least likely to be attended with success.

Infinitely superior to the manner of writing which we find in

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* Cicero, however, speaks highly of the other works of Varro. "Tu ætatem patriæ, tu descriptiones temporum, tu sacrorum jura, tu sacerdotum, tu domesticam, tu bellicam disciplinam, tu sedem regionum, locorum, tu omnium divinarum humanarumque rerum, nomina, genera, officia, causas aperuisti."

Sallust, is that of Cæsar. Endowed by nature with what we may truly term genius, the extraordinary man was destined to excel in every thing to which he turned the powers of his mind. Unrivalled in military enterprise, of first rate talents as a public speaker, engrossed incessantly in those various and agitating occupations which attend the life of an active general and intriguing politician, he still found time to compose those celebrated Commentaries, which, in their own style as military annals, have never been excelled. To require in the writings of Cæsar those qualifications which we look for in the graver productions of a professed historian, would be to mistake entirely the character of the work. Composed in the midst of the hurry of a camp, and written probably in those few learned hours which fill up the intervals occurring in military operations, they can at no higher merit than that of being a faithful delineation of his campaigns in Gaul. As such, in that interest which is created by the talents and success of their author, as well as in perspicuity of narration and elegance and purity of style, they have ever remained unrivalled.

Different from any of the prose writers above spoken of, but combining more excellent virtues than are to be found in them all, was Titus Livius, the father, as he has been called, of Roman history. Of one hundred and forty books which he had completed, only thirty-five have reached our time. There is certainly to be found in this writer a gravity, it might almost be called a majesty, throughout his narration—a sagacity in his remarks, although not frequently intruded—and a fervid eloquence in the speeches not unsparingly scattered through his history, which countenance, in a great degree, those high eulogiums which Quintilian, and in a later age Casaubon, have pronounced on him. There is not, indeed, to be found amongst the Greeks any historian, who, with equal political judgment, perspicuity of arrangement, and a happy selection of the most important facts, possesses so wonderful an eloquence of expression.*

In the decline of Roman literature, we find many historians—but amongst these, few of great character: yet Tacitus alone would suffice to make the age he belonged to, illustrious in literature. This great writer, however, (although his merits as an historian have been universally acknowledged,) has some prominent

* *May*, our old English poet, in his tragedy of Agrippina, has the following beautiful eulogium of historical composition, which cannot be applied to any author with more propriety than to Livy.

"His style is full and princely,
Stately and absolute beyond whate'er
These eyes have seen; and Rome, whose majesty
Is there described, in after times shall owe
For her memorial to that learned pen
More than to all those fading monuments
Built with the riches of the spoiled world."

faults. In the narrative of those great events with which his history is occupied, he ascribes too much to the operation of deep and artful sentences of policy. His ingenious and intriguing mind is ever restlessly searching in the regions of conjecture for some dark or mysterious motive of conduct, ascribing too little to the influence of more simple and apparent causes, and eager to grasp at every shadow of a reason, provided it be sufficiently uncommon or unnatural. Too often mere probabilities are stated as demonstratively certain, and bare conjectures assume the rank of decided truths. In addition to this fault, which seemed from a desire of being more than commonly acute in accounting for even the most trifling events, there is in Tacitus an unnecessary brevity, and mysteriousness of style, which reminds us sometimes of the same affectation in Sallust. It is by no means to be wondered at that an author whose train of thought is so uncommon, and whose language is generally so concise, should not unfrequently require a considerable effort to be understood at all. And it would be well if all authors would recollect that they are writing for posterity, as well as for their own age; that their works, if intrinsically valuable, will be read when time shall have deprived future nations of that deep and critical knowledge of the language in which they were written which belongs to their contemporaries; and, therefore, that the most simple and unambitious style will ever be the most lasting. Still, however, Tacitus is, in many respects, an unrivalled historian, and it is the effect even of that fault above mentioned, that he has penetrated with more acuteness into the secret springs of human policy, and developed with more sagacity the causes of great events than most others.

Let us now attend to the character and merits of the most celebrated of the Roman poets.

In addition to the dramatists whom we have already adverted to, the only poets who wrote during the period of the commonwealth were Lucretius and Tibullus. A philosophic poem is, of all literary productions, the least likely to be successful; and Lucretius, so far as philosophy is concerned, is ponderous and verbose in his expression, perplexed in his meaning, rugged in his versification. He had in him, however, the materials of a true poet; and not unfrequently, where he has shaken himself loose of his unfortunate subject, he rises into passages of uncommon brilliancy. But the misfortune is, that that luxuriance of imagination which is the very soul of poetry, appears foily and absurdity when applied to philosophy. The Cardinal de Polignac, in his *Anti-Lucretius*; Buchanan in his poem *De Sphæra*; and Darwin, in his various botanical, mechanical, and philosophic rhapsodies, have all strongly corroborated the truth of this observation. All of them—and in no common degree the first—have scattered throughout the rugged materials of their works the real gems of poetry; all of them evince what they could have been by splendid passages; but

all of them have been tied down, by the nature of their subject, to a species of dry recapitulation, or of tedious particularity, which is either too dull to be convincing, or too decided to be poetical. Lucretius himself, perhaps, owes his IMMORTALITY to some two or three hundred *shorter* lines, altogether parenthetical as regards his main design.

Catullus was the contemporary of Lucretius. The characteristics of his poetry, which consisted of odes, epigrams, and epithalamiums, (and which was entirely formed on the model of the Greek school,) appear to be a learned purity of diction, a certain elegance and suavity in his sentences, a virulent and biting strain of satire, and, in his amatory pieces, a voluptuous and highly colored imagery, which sometimes approximates into broad licentiousness.

In the succeeding age of Augustus, the poetic genius of the Romans attained to the pitch of its highest elevation. Virgil, Horace, Ovid, and Tibullus, were all contemporaries; and it may be safely asserted that these poets, in their several departments, were never equalled in any one of the succeeding ages of the empire.

To offer here a minute criticism upon the poetry of Virgil would be both unnecessary and impertinent. Every one, on this head, has read, thought, and felt for himself. Rising into the sublime in many places where his subject naturally demands it; tender and pathetic in others, where the situation of his characters calls necessarily for those touches; luxuriant yet terse in his descriptions of scenery; grave, moral, and eloquent in his sentiments, and at the same time condensing and regulating all these uncommon excellences by the utmost purity and correctness of taste, it was impossible but that the poet, who united in himself such various and uncommon powers, should have been the admiration of his own, and the model to succeeding, ages.

Horace, the friend and contemporary of Virgil, is to be considered in three different lights,—as a lyric poet, a satirist, and a critic. In all he is excellent. In his odes, he has greater *variety* than any of his Greek predecessors appear to have attained; and he has probably equalled the most of them in their several departments. The great charm, however, is in the varied turn of his expressions, that *curiosa felicitas* (to use a term of Petronius) which no other lyric poet has ever reached. His satires, on the other hand, possess a gentlemanlike slyness and obliquity of censure which distinguish them *toto cœlo* from the keen and cutting sarcasm of Juvenal.*

* To form a just estimate of the comparative merits of Juvenal and Horace as satirists, we have only to compare those satires where the two poets profess to treat the same topics, as the eighth of Juvenal with the sixth of the 1st Book of Horace, where the subject is a discussion on true nobility, or the tenth of Juvenal with the first of the 1st Book of Horace.

As a critic, the rules which Horace has given are almost entirely borrowed from Aristotle; but he has arranged them with that acute and admirable judgment, and illustrated them with that aptitude of imagery which are conspicuous in the rest of his poetical compositions.

Ovid is the next and last of that constellation of poets which formed the honor of the Augustan age. In what we term *genius*, he is decidedly inferior both to Virgil and Horace. He is deficient in grandeur of conception, in simplicity of expression, and in that high-wrought and ardent imagination which is the accompaniment of the more lofty kinds of genius. But if he wants all this, he possesses still many excellences. His invention is astonishing: in variety of story, in ingenuity of connection, in the profusion and facility of his versification, he cannot be surpassed. He is, in these respects, a kind of Ariosto amongst the ancients. But even these great qualities have led him into errors. He is generally too diffuse to be grand or forcible—too particular, too much a lover of the detail of description, ever to reach the sublime. He is, in the words of Quintilian, *nimium amator sui ingenii*—too fond of his own ingenuity. His learning becomes too often tedious, his narration prolix, his invention puerile. He possesses, in short, more of those minor qualifications which are necessary to constitute a true poet than any of his contemporaries:—he can be tender, harmonious, pathetic, and sometimes eloquent:—but if he is ever great, it is only in a few insulated passages, which are scattered through his works. It is more, perhaps, the effect of chance or of imitation, than of that steady ray of genius which illuminates the nobler work of his friend and contemporary Virgil.

The elegies of Tibullus are elegant, but generally insipid. They never offend, but they seldom move; he is a pleasing, but not an original poet, and, owing to an extreme poverty of fancy, he is constantly pacing the same beaten track, *eodem pene gyro concluditur*.

The last of the Roman poets whom we may call truly excellent in his own department is *Martial*. The sense which the ancients appear to have affixed to the term "epigram," appears to have been very different from its common acceptation in the present day. By epigram we generally understand some happy or amusing conceit, some sudden ebullition of wit, or humor, expressed in a short and sententious distich. According to the meaning of the ancients, however, there was no limitation as to these qualities. Any happy turn of thought, whether playful or serious, expressed in poetical language, was denominated an epigram. It is for this reason that, amongst the Anthologies of the Greeks, we meet with epigrams which are alternately written in a jocose or serious strain, and which, if they are often smart and humorous, are as frequently tender and pathetic. Such is in truth the real character of the Epigrams of Martial; and the execution of these, to whatever

class they belong, is for the most part peculiarly happy. Yet he has many faults. His ingenuity and quickness have often betrayed him into overstrained and artificial conceits. Conscious of a peculiar talent in discerning remote, though often ludicrous analogies, he is ever too anxious to display this. He plays too much upon the sense, and puns too frequently on the sound and meaning of his words; and he has that unpardonable fault, so common to the age in which he wrote, of introducing an obscenity and licentiousness into his verses, which, although it recommended them to that degraded people for whom he wrote, is fortunately too gross to procure any serious mischief, or to create any other feeling than that of disgust.

The first symptom of the corruption of writing is a species of false and inflated style, a luxuriance of ornament, and a fondness for quaint and pointed terms of expression. This was discernible even in Martial. When these succeed to, or rather usurp, the place of the chaste, manly, and simple mode of expression—of that style which attends more to the sense which it conveys, than to the terms or manner in which it is constructed, it is a certain indication of the decay of a just and genuine taste. Even in the end of the reign of Augustus, poetry seems to have been rather on the decline; and in the succeeding age, if we except the compositions of Martial and Juvenal, nature and simplicity had almost entirely given place to bombast and affectation. Although in Lucan we find some scattered examples of genuine poetic imagery, and in Persius several happy strokes of keen and animated satire, yet they hardly repay the trouble of wading through the unnatural fustian of the one, or the affected obscurity of the other—who, however, we should remember, wrote the pieces which remain to us in early youth.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### Roman Philosophy—Public and Private Manners.

In the present chapter, I shall consider, in the first place, the state of philosophy, amongst the Romans, and afterwards proceed to the subject of their public and private manners. In the early ages of the republic, the Romans, occupied in continual wars with the states of Italy, or, in the short intervals of respite from these,

engrossed in their domestic dissensions, had little leisure to bestow on the cultivation of the sciences, and had no idea of philosophical speculation. It was not till the end of the sixth century, after the building of the city, and in the interval between the war with Perseus of Macedon and the third Punic war, that philosophy made its first appearance at Rome. A number of Achæans, banished from their native country, had settled in Italy. Part of these, amongst whom were some men of talents and learning, particularly Polybius the Megalopolitan, took up their abode at Rome, and applying themselves there to the pursuit of history and the education of the Roman youth, soon diffused a relish for those studies, hitherto unknown to the rising republic. This new taste was, as I have hinted at in the former chapter, very unfavorably regarded by the older citizens. The senators, who lived in a perpetual struggle with a people jealous of their civil rights, were in no measure disposed to encourage philosophical disquisitions on the origin of government, on the foundation of liberty, and the natural rights of mankind. To repress, therefore, such dangerous studies, this body passed a decree, banishing those foreign philosophers from their city. This, however, was an ineffectual remedy. The passion for literature may perhaps be checked by political encouragements, but once roused it is not easily extinguished by political restraints. A few years after this, Carneades and Critolaus, arrived in an Athenian embassy at Rome; the discourses of these philosophers added new strength and vigor to that taste whose first efforts the Roman senate had in vain attempted to extinguish, and the Greek philosophy soon became as generally relished in this era of the republic, as during its earliest ages it had been either unknown or despised.

It was natural that, in the choice among the different systems which the several sects or schools of Greek philosophy presented, those tenets should be most favorably received and most generally adopted, which accorded most with the national character and genius of the people. The Romans had not yet shaken off the severity of ancient manners, and the doctrines of the Stoical philosophy were, therefore, most nearly allied to their own previous conceptions of morality. The philosophy of Aristotle was in truth little known in Rome till the age of Cicero. Cratippus then taught his system with great reputation, though that unnecessarily tedious and complicated mode of reasoning adopted by this philosopher does not appear ever to have had a numerous party to support it. Lucullus, whose stay in Greece afforded him an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the doctrines of all the different schools, at his return to Rome disseminated a very general taste for philosophising. He does not, indeed, appear to have attached himself exclusively to the tenets of any particular sect. If he had a preference for any, it was for that of Plato. The philosophy of the New Academy, which professed to teach the art

of defending all opinions, would necessarily find its partisans among the lawyers and orators. Cicero, if he professed any settled system at all, (a point which his philosophical writings leave very enigmatical,) seems most attached to this.

The truth probably is, that, in his philosophical works, his general purpose was to give rather a history of the ancient philosophy, than any defence or exposition of his own peculiar opinions; to explain to his countrymen in their own language whatever the philosophers of all sects and all ages had taught, with a view towards the enlargement of their understanding and the improving of their morals. This he declares to be his purpose in his "Treatise de Finibus," in that, De Natura Deorum, in his "Tusculan Disputations," and in his book on the Academic Philosophy. As to physics, or natural philosophy, Cicero seems to have entertained the same opinion with Socrates—that a minute and particular attention to these inquiries was a study rather curious than useful, and contributing but little to the real benefit of mankind—a very extraordinary idea, he would seem to have been prevalent with most of the ancient philosophers, if we except Aristotle and the elder Pliny. It was reserved for our own country, in a future and more enlightened age of the world, to lay, in this severe and critical examination of Nature, which was then so much despised, the solid basis of all true and genuine philosophy. Of the writings and principles of Aristotle a particular account has been given in treating of the progress of philosophy amongst the Greeks. Nothing need here be added upon this subject. The elder Pliny, whose books on natural history still remain entire, was perhaps one of the most extraordinary literary phænomena that ever existed in the world. In one of the letters of his nephew, Pliny the younger, there is an account given of his studies, and a description of the manner of life of this curious man, which as it is extremely curious, I shall be easily excused for inserting.

"You admire," says Pliny to Macer, "the works of my uncle, and wish to have a complete collection of them; I will point out to you the order in which they were composed: for, however immaterial that may seem, it is a sort of information not at all unacceptable to men of letters. The first book he published was a treatise concerning the Art of throwing the Javelin on Horseback. This he wrote when he commanded a troop of horse, and it is drawn up with great accuracy and judgment. He next published the Life of Pomponius Secundus, in two books, and after that, the History of the Wars in Germany, in twenty books, in which he gave an account of all the battles we had been engaged in against that nation; and a Treatise upon Eloquence, divided into six books. In this work he takes the orator from his cradle, and leads him up till he has carried him to the highest point of perfection in his art. In the latter part of Nero's reign, when the tyranny of the times made it dangerous to engage in any studies

of a more free and elevated nature, he published a piece of criticism in eight books, concerning Ambiguity in Expression. He completed the history which Aufidius Bassus left unfinished, and added to it thirty books: and lastly, he has left thirty-seven books of natural history, a work of great compass and learning, and almost as various as Nature herself. You will wonder how a man so engaged as he was could find time to compose so many books; but your surprise will rise still higher, when you hear, that for some time he engaged in the profession of an advocate: that he died in his fifty-sixth year; and that from the time of his quitting the bar till his death, he was employed in the execution of the highest employments, and in the service of his prince. But he had a quick apprehension, joined to unwearied application. Before day-break he used to wait upon Vespasian, who like him chose that time to transact his business. When he had finished the affairs which the emperor committed to his charge, he returned home to his studies. After a short repast at noon, he would repose himself in the sun, during which time, some author was read to him, from which, according to his constant custom, he made extracts and observations. When this was over, he generally took the cold bath, after that, a slight refreshment, and then reposed himself a little. Then, as if beginning a new day, he immediately resumed his studies till supper time, during which, a book was commonly read to him, upon which he would make occasional remarks. In summer, he rose from supper by day-light and in winter as soon as it was dark. Such was his manner of life, amidst the hurry and noise of the town: but in the country, his whole time was devoted to study without intermission, excepting when in the bath, for even when undressing, and when he was rubbed by his servants, he was either listening to a reader, or dictating himself. A secretary constantly attended him in his chariot. I remember he once reproved me for walking. 'You might,' says he, 'employ those hours to more advantage,' for he thought all time was lost which was not given to study. By this extraordinary application he found time to write so many volumes. I cannot but smile, (continues the younger Pliny,) when I hear myself called a studious man, who, in comparison to him, am a mere loiterer. But why do I mention myself, who am diverted from these pursuits by numberless affairs both public and private? Even they whose whole lives are engaged in study must blush when placed in the same view with him."

This picture of the manner of life pursued by the elder Pliny will be allowed by all to be a very singular one, but it is too inconsistent with the ordinary powers of man to serve as a model of imitation. It will appear also from this, that Pliny was infinitely more studious of storing his mind with the opinions of others than to form opinions of his own; for one who is constantly employed, either in listening to a reader, or in dictating to an amanuensis, can-

not possibly give sufficient exercise either to his judgment or his invention. And this, indeed, appears to have been the case with Pliny, if we may judge from the only work of his remaining, *The Books of Natural History*, which is, indeed, little else than a most voluminous compilation from the works of Varro, the elder Cato, Hyginus, Pomponius Mela, Aristotle, Theophrastus, Herodotus, and other writers—a work valuable, no doubt, as containing an immense treasury of the knowledge of the ancients, but filled with discordant and contradictory opinions, and indicating, on the whole, no original genius in the compiler.

It was above remarked that, when philosophy first made its way from Greece to Rome, the doctrines of the Stoical school were then chiefly prevalent in the republic. With a people who were only emerging from a simplicity, or rather a severity of manners, it is not probable that the system of Epicurus would find a very favorable reception. As luxury, however, advanced, and corruption of manners began to undermine the strictness of the ancient morality, it also found its votaries. This change in the Roman manners, it may not be unattractive to consider somewhat minutely.

The picture of the Roman people during the first five centuries is so perfectly distinct, so widely different from what we find it in the latter ages of the republic, that we might at first be induced to think that some very extraordinary causes must have cooperated to produce so total an alteration. Yet the transition was easy and natural, and was in the Roman people the necessary and inevitable consequence of that rich and luxurious situation in which the virtuous and heroic temper of the earlier times had conduced to place the republic. A spirit of temperance, of frugality, and of industry must be the characteristics of every infant colony. The poverty of the first Romans, the narrow territory to which they were limited, made it necessary for every citizen to labor for his subsistence. In the first ages, the patricians, when in the country, forgot all the distinctions of rank, and toiled daily in the fields like the lowest plebeian. Examples of this are familiar to every reader. Cincinnatus we have seen named dictator by the voice of his country, while at the plough. M. Curius, after expelling Pyrrhus from Italy, retired to the possession of a small farm, which he assiduously cultivated. The elder Cato was fond of this spot, and revered it on account of its former master. It was in emulation of the example of this ancient Roman that Cato betook himself to agriculture. Scipio Africanus also, after the conquest of Hannibal and the reduction of Carthage, retired to his paternal fields, and with his own hand reared and grafted his fruit-trees. If such was the conduct and example of the highest magistrates and most eminent men in the state, what idea must we form of the manners and customs of the inferior ranks?

In times of peace and tranquillity, most of the citizens, employed at their small farms, visited the town only every ninth or market day. There they provided themselves with necessaries for the week, and took their share in the public business of the commonwealth at the comitia. It was on these market-days that the tribunes harangued the people, and it was then that those men—employed for their daily occupation in laboring and husbandry—feeling their weight in the public deliberations, learned to know their own importance in the state, which was in no respect diminished by the necessary cares and duties to which, in those happy and primitive ages, custom had annexed respect and honor instead of meanness or reproach.

Thus simple were the occupations, and, of consequence, the manners of the ancient Romans. Employed either in their warlike expeditions, or, when at peace, in the frugal, laborious, and innocent avocations of a country life, it was to be expected, as a necessary result, that industry and a virtuous simplicity of manners should be the principal features in the character of a people so situated. "Domi militiaque (says Sallust) boni mores colebantur—jus bonumque apud eos non legibus magis quam naturâ valebat: duabus artibus, audacia in bello, ubi pax evenerat æquitate, seque rempublicam curabant." But this very discipline, and those manners which paved the way for the extension of the Roman arms, and for the conquest of the surrounding empires, became, of consequence, the remote cause of the corruption of the manners of the people in the later ages of the republic, and the introduction of that luxurious and effeminate spirit from which it is not difficult to deduce the ruin and downfall of the commonwealth. When, after the second Punic war, they had pushed their conquests into Asia, and in the third Punic war accomplished the subversion of Carthage, and acquired the unlimited sovereignty of Greece, then it necessarily happened that, losing their ancient manners with their ancient poverty, possessed of wealth, and adopting with a willing servility the customs of the nations they subdued, the Romans became as vicious, as luxurious, and as effeminate as they had before been remarkable for their virtue, their industry, and their rigid simplicity of manners. They appeared now to be actuated by a new spirit, but chiefly by an affectation of taste in the fine arts, in which nature certainly had never qualified them to make any decided or eminent progress. The faculty to excel in these requires not only a predisposition of nature, an inherent acuteness of perception of what is beautiful, but also an intimate acquaintance with the objects of taste, and a long habit of exercising the judgment exclusively upon them. Of this natural predisposition to the fine arts the Romans never evinced any traces. On the contrary, even in the periods of their greatest refinement, we hear not of the excellence of a single painter, sculptor, or architect; nor did they indeed possess, until their conquest of Greece,

any acquaintance with those exalted specimens of art upon which a corrected and chastened taste could alone have been formed. At that period, indeed, an immense field was at once opened to their view. The master-pieces of art poured in upon them; but these they did not possess the talents to appreciate. The extravagances of glare and show were more suited to their judgment, and possessed more attractive beauties to their unpractised eyes; and it is natural, therefore, to conclude that the Roman luxury, so far as the fine arts were concerned, could only manifest itself in an awkward, heavy, and tasteless magnificence.

In order to give some idea of the manners of the Romans after they had undergone this remarkable change, or rather towards the end of the commonwealth, at a time when the extravagance of general luxury was felt throughout the whole body politic, and to point out also some customs which were peculiarly characteristic of this people, it may not be improper shortly to describe the manner in which the day was spent at Rome, as well by the lower as by the higher and more idle classes of the citizens. Extraordinary as it may appear to us, it is certain that the Romans were, for nearly five centuries, utterly ignorant of the division of the day by hours, and knew no other distinction but that of morning, midday, and evening. The laws of the Twelve Tables divided the day into two portions only, *ortus et occasus*, nor was it until a considerable time after, that they added a third division, *meridies*. We are informed by Pliny the naturalist, that till the 477th year of Rome, when Papirius Cursor caused the first sun-dial to be put upon the wall of the temple of Quirinus, they had never used any method of measuring time; that Valerius Messala brought another from Catania, in Sicily, and that these two, although very inaccurate in dividing time, continued to be the only regulators of the day at Rome for nearly a century, till Scipio Nasica introduced the water-clock, which showed the hours both of the day and night.

The first, second, and third hours were differently employed at Rome by the different ranks of the people; and even by these differently according to their separate inclinations. It was the custom with many to begin the day by visiting the temples, where, according as their ideas of devotion were more or less strict, they either sacrificed, or paid their adoration by simply kissing their hand, or prostrating themselves before their own particular deity. Those who were more rigorously devout made their conscientious circuit to most of the temples in the city, a business which must necessarily have occupied many hours; but the great bulk of the citizens, attached to temporal concerns, and intent on more substantial duties, employed the morning very differently. The *Patroni* were attended by all their *Clientes*. The great had their levees, at which either their inferiors who wished to recommend themselves to their protection, or even their equals who courted

their favor and friendship, crowded in the morning to pay their compliments. Pompey did not think it beneath him to appear at the levee of Cicero. The custom was to wait in the vestibule or ante-chamber, till the great man made his appearance; to pay him some compliment, couched either in wishes for his health or panegyric on his talents, or congratulation on any promotion which might have occurred, and afterwards to accompany him—either walking in his train, or attending by the side of his litter—to the senate-house, or to the forum, and thence to reconduct him home.

The lower ranks and the more servile and parasitical courtiers, who had many such visits to pay, must have necessarily begun very early in the morning. Juvenal humorously describes them as setting out by star-light, and does not even give them time to tie their garters.

These visits Pliny calls *ante-lucana officia*. They were sometimes so troublesome to the great man to whom they were paid, that it was not unusual for him to go out by a back door, and so give his visiters the slip. Horace, in his fifth epistle, playfully advises his friend Torquatus to escape the importunities of his clients by this sinister expedient :—

"rebus omissis,
Atria servantem postico falle clientem"

This liberty, however, we may rest assured, was not very often taken; for if, as we have above seen, the expedients of those ancient courtiers, who in these remote times solicited the patronage of the great in Rome, were in few respects different from that watchful and attentive assiduity which still distinguishes the same classes amongst ourselves, we may rely also that the great in Rome were no less ambitious of receiving these marks of distinction, than the powerful in this country. Popularity was there, indeed, always the first object of ambition; and when the great man made the tour of his circle at the levee, he was not, we may be assured, the least complaisant of his company. And, indeed, in the latter ages of the republic it was not enough for the great to show their affability by an empty salute or a simple squeeze of the hand; the courtiers were then accustomed to expect more substantial marks of their favor, and thought themselves ill used if they were not regaled with a breakfast of the most delicate viands, or repaid for their attendance by a present or a piece of money.

From the levee they next proceeded to the tribunal or to the forum—some, as concerned there either in private or public business, others for amusement to hear what was going on. There the time was spent till noon, which among the Romans was the hour of dinner, chiefly a very light repast, and of which it was not customary to invite any guests to partake. After dinner the youth repaired to the Campus Martius, and spent the hours till sunset in a variety of sports and athletic exercises. The elder

class retired for an hour to repose, and then passed the afternoon in their porticoes or galleries which, in the house of every man of rank, formed a conspicuous part of the building. Many of these were opened to the air, supported on pillars of stone or marble, under which they enjoyed the exercise of walking, and sometimes of being carried in their litters. Other galleries were sheltered from the air, and lighted by windows of a transparent talc or lapis specularis which supplied the place of glass.* These covered galleries were ornamented in the richest manner, and with the most expensive decorations—gilded roofs, paintings on the walls, and statues in the niches;—and adjoining to them were their libraries, which, in the latter days of the republic, became an article of great expense, and on the furnishing of which the higher classes used particularly to pique themselves. The sumptuous Lucullus exceeded all his contemporaries in this, as indeed in every other species of luxury. His library was more extensive than that of any other private citizen, and the use he made of it more noble. His porticoes, the halls where his books were arranged, and his gardens with which they communicated, were all open to the public. Strangers were more particularly welcomed, and his house, Plutarch informs us, became the asylum and the prytaneum of all the Greeks at Rome. In these galleries the master of the house amused himself in the evening in conversations with his guests, or in sports with his friends. There likewise the poets came to recite their works, although this practice was probably confined to the most ostentatious or the most needy, who in this way attempted to recommend themselves to a patron. "Non recito cuiquam (says Horace) nisi amicis, idque coactus."

The houses of private citizens, and even of those of the higher classes, were of a very moderate size during the times of the republic. The Romans appear to have lived much in the open air, as a great part of their buildings consisted of vestibules and porticoes. The houses were detached from each other, and usually of one floor. The different apartments had each a single door, entering from the gallery or portico. These apartments, except the *triclinium* or hall, where they sat at meals, were generally small, and lighted only by one square window near the ceilings. The furniture of the house and its decorations were simple, the walls ornamented with fresco painting in a light and cheerful style. The larger houses had each a garden behind for the cultivation of vegetables, and a few trees to yield a refreshing shade in summer.

This luxury of walking and amusing themselves under cover was not long confined to the rich and the powerful. These, to increase their popularity, built porticoes for the use of the public,

* "Hibernis objecta notis specularia puros
Admittunt soles, et sine fæce diem."—*Martial.*

and contended with each other in bestowing on them the most expensive adornments. In these porticoes all classes were to be found amusing themselves. Indeed idleness and luxury, towards the end of the republic, characterized equally the richer and the poorer citizens. They had approached that period so necessarily incident to every wealthy and overgrown state, when industry becomes a reproach, and amusement forms the engrossing object of life.

The passion for public games and magnificent spectacles constituted, at this period, a very striking feature in the Roman character. The shows of the amphitheatre rose naturally out of that taste for martial exercises, which we find in the first ages of every warlike people. About the 490th year of Rome, Marcus and Decimus Brutus presented a combat of gladiators for the first time at Rome. About a century after that period the athletæ were introduced for a public show; and there were combats of slaves with bears and lions. Sylla, during his prætorship, exhibited a combat where a hundred men fought with a hundred lions; and Julius Cæsar, during his ædileship, presented a show where there fought three hundred couples of gladiators.* It is astonishing to what a height the passion for these bloody entertainments was carried; and what is very remarkable was, that the spirit of luxury, which is in general found rather favorable to humanity, or at the least productive of a refinement of manners, amongst the Roman people, on the contrary, was marked by an increasing and unnatural ferocity in the public amusements—a circumstance not unworthy of attention from those who, in the present day, are advocates for those public fighting matches which, in point of brutality, are, perhaps, little inferior to the more mortal combats at Rome.

The Lanistæ, whose business it was to instruct these gladiators in their profession, taught them not only the use of their arms, but likewise the most graceful postures of falling when they were wounded, and the finest attitudes of dying in. The food of these unfortunate victims was likewise prescribed to them, and was of such a nature as to enrich and thicken the blood, so that it might flow more leisurely through their wounds, and thus the spectators might be the longer gratified with the sight of their agonies. These miserable beings were also accustomed, on entering their profession, to take an oath, of which the form has been preserved to us in a fragment of Petronius. "In verba Eumolpi juravimus, uri, vinciri, verberari, ferroque necari, et quicquid aliud Eumolpus

* Dion Cassius, in speaking of Pompey's shows, in which above five hundred lions were killed, besides elephants and other wild beasts, tells us it was a miserable spectacle, even to the populace, who were affected by the mournful cries of these poor animals. (Dion, b. xxxix.) and Cicero broadly condemns those inhuman spectacles, as in his time affording no delight to the mob who gazed upon them.—Cicero, Epist. ad Familiares, b. vii. Epist. 1.

jussisset tamquam legitimi gladiatores domino, corpora animosque religiosisse addicimus"—i. e. "We swear that we will suffer ourselves to be bound, scourged, burned, or killed by the sword, or whatever else Eumolpus ordains, and thus, like freeborn gladiators, we religiously devote both soul and body to our master." Is it not dreadful that human nature should ever have been reduced to such a state of degrading and incomprehensible barbarity?

In a former chapter, on the progress of literature amongst the Romans, the entertainments of the theatre were discussed at some length, but amongst these entertainments none during the later periods of the commonwealth became so popular as the taste for pantomime. Schools were instituted where this art was publicly taught, and these, we read, were often more frequented by the younger patricians than the lectures of the orators. A decree of the senate was found necessary to prohibit its members from attending these indecent assemblies, and disclaiming all of the equestrian order from publicly courting and encouraging the performers of pantomime. We may conceive to what a pitch of degeneracy the public manners had arrived when we read that the affairs of the state were interrupted, and the minds of its ministers embroiled, by the contentions of the different parties who supported each their favorite actors, and that, on this account, it was more than once found necessary to expel them from the city.

Following the Romans through the ordinary occupations of the day, it was customary for them to go from the porticoes or the theatre to take the bath. Water, which in the more frugal days of the republic, was used only for the necessary purposes of life, was not brought to Rome by aqueducts till the 441st year of the city. It was till that time drawn from the Tiber, or from wells in the town. But it soon become one of the chief articles of luxury, to supply as well the public as the private baths, and many aqueducts were accordingly built, and public reservoirs and fountains reared in every quarter of the city. This luxury increased to such a degree that, under Augustus, there were seven hundred basins, a hundred and five fountains, and a hundred and thirty public reservoirs, all adorned in the most sumptuous manner, with columns, statues, and basso-relievoes. To superintend these became an office of considerable dignity and emolument, and under the emperors was filled mostly by men of the first rank.

The practice of taking the cold bath was in early use in Rome, where the heat of the climate and the fatigue attending the athletic exercises made it requisite alike for the purposes of cleanliness and comfort. It was not till pretty late in the republic that the hot baths began to be introduced; but at last it became customary for all to take the warm bath before sitting down to supper. The rich had their baths in their own houses, in which, as in every other thing, they vied with each other in expense and magnificence. Seneca, when he speaks of this piece of luxury, tells us his countrymen dis-

dained to set their feet upon any thing but precious stones; and Pliny wishes old *Fabricius* alive, to witness the degeneracy of his posterity, whose seats in their private baths were made of solid silver. Under the later emperors, indeed, this luxury appears to have been carried to an almost incredible excess. The public baths built by Augustus, by Diocletian, and by Caracalla, were sumptuous beyond description. These were open to all the citizens, who, for a trifling gratuity, had slaves to attend on them, to assist them in undressing, and to rub their bodies with flesh-brushes. The baths of Diocletian were so large that they could accommodate 3,000 persons bathing at the same time. They were adorned with columns of the finest marble, and decorated with a profusion of statues and of paintings. They consisted of a variety of apartments destined not only for the purposes of bathing, but for various amusements, and even for literary and philosophic exercises. There were public libraries adjoining to the baths, halls of resort for the studious or for the idle, who met to talk over the news of the day; and to these also the poets resorted, as we have observed they did to the porticoes, to recite their compositions.

In the houses of the great, the bath was used immediately before they went to supper; and they came from the bath to the table in a loose sort of robe, called, from its use, conviviales or triclinaria. It was customary for them to sup between the ninth and tenth hours, which, when the sun rose at six, would correspond with our three or four in the afternoon, and at a proportional distance from sunset, as the days were longer or shorter. They must, therefore, have always sat down to supper with day-light, and indeed Vitruvius directs the supper-room to be constructed in such a manner that it shall have its aspect to the setting-sun: "Hyberna triclinia recedentem solem spectare debent," lib. vi. c. 5; but they often, however early their hour of commencement, prolonged the entertainment through most of the night.

It is singular that, as with us moderns luxury has thrown the meals much later than they were in the more frugal days of our ancestors, the same cause was attended with very contrary effects at Rome. In the early ages of the commonwealth, when day-light was valuable for the purposes of labor and industry, the citizens did not sup till sunset, but in the more advanced periods of the Roman state, when the luxury of the table became one of the most serious concerns in life, it was found necessary to begin early, that time might not be found wanting for such important concerns. The custom of reclining on couches came not into use till the end of the sixth century, and for some time after it was adopted by the men, the Roman ladies, from motives of decency, continued to sit upright at table; but these scruples were soon removed, and all promiscuously adopted the recumbent posture, except the youth who had not yet attained the age of putting on the manly robe. They sat in a respectful posture at the bottom of the couch.

These couches were ranged along three sides of a square table, which was then called *triclinium*, as was likewise the chamber itself in which they supped. The fourth side of the table remained open for the servants to place and remove the dishes. Above was a large canopy of cloth suspended by the corners, to prevent the company being incommoded with dust. It was this custom that enables Horace to introduce a ludicrous accident, which he describes as occurring at a supper given by the niggardly, but ostentatious Nasidienus to Maecenas, and some other courtiers. Whilst the landlord is enlarging on the praises of a favorite dish, and discussing the merits of the component ingredients of the sauce, the canopy falls down and involves every thing, host, guest, supper and dishes, in a cloud of dust and darkness.

> "Interea suspensa graves aulæa ruinas
> In patinam fecere trahentia pulveris atri
> Quantum non Aquilo Campanis excitat agris."*
> *B. ii. Sat. 8.*

Every feast was attended with a certain mixture of religious ceremony. It began and concluded with a libation to the gods. In barbarous nations we know there was ever a strong affinity between a repast and a sacrifice. The offerings to the gods consisted of what men esteemed always their choicest food, and the priests, as the ministers of the gods, ate the sacrifice. The practice of libation, also, was of the highest antiquity. It was universal both among the Greeks and Romans; and the idea of the meal being a religious ceremony, both with regard to the libations of wine, and the offerings of the meat to the priests, showed itself in several other particulars. It was esteemed a most solemn obligation, if a person laying his hand upon the table, should pronounce an oath. The *triclinium* was looked upon as an altar. The salt was also held sacred, and it was regarded as an unfavorable omen should it be spilled or overturned. It was customary, also, to place upon the table small *images* or *penates*—*Genii mensæ præsides*, or *epitrapetii*, as they were called, to whose honor it was chiefly that the libation was performed. These religious notions had this good effect, that amidst all their intemperance the Romans accounted it a species of sacrilege to allow a quarrel or an animosity at table, and the height of impiety to commit any violence or outrage. But these religious ideas could be only felt by a moderate and a virtuous people. When luxury had once spread its contagion, as was too certainly the case before the end of the republic, a few traces may remain in customs and ceremonies, but these can only be consid-

* In the time of Seneca, their halls of banquet were constructed with movable roofs, adorned with paintings, so that the ceiling was made to change along with the different courses. "Versatilia coenationum laquearia ita cogitamentat ut subinde alia facies atque alia succedat, et totus tecta quotes fercula mutentur."—*Seneca*, Epist. 90.

ered as the shadows of ancient virtue, after the substance had long perished. Such was the case with regard to the ceremonies we have mentioned. They still continued in observance after luxury and debauchery had reached their utmost height; but all those ideas of religion which had been interwoven with them were gone for ever.

It would be a task at once disagreeable and unprofitable to describe minutely those excesses which are painted in the strongest and often the most disgusting colors by the ancient writers, both satirists and historians, or to dwell on the intemperance of those degraded times when, as Livy tells us, "a cook, who by their frugal ancestors was looked upon as the vilest and meanest of slaves, was considered as an officer of high importance, and that trade dignified by the name of an art, which before was regarded as the most servile drudgery."

It was a general custom, in preparing for a luxurious meal, to take a vomit a short time before sitting down to table. This was not regarded as a mark either of gluttony or epicurism, but was held to be done in compliment to the entertainer, that his guests might be enabled to carry off a greater quantity of his good fare. When Julius Cæsar paid a visit of reconciliation to Cicero by inviting himself to sup with him, he took care to let Cicero know that he had taken a vomit before hand, and was resolved to make a most enormous meal — and Cicero tells us he kept his word, which, for his own part, he took very kindly, and as a mark of Cæsar's high politeness. (Cic. Epist. ad Attic. 13, 52.)

Compared with that of the Romans, the luxury of the moderns would scarcely deserve the name of intemperance. Before the principal meal was placed on the table, it was customary to present an *antecænium* or collation, which consisted of pickles and spices, to provoke and sharpen the appetite. The thirst excited by this prelude to more serious occupation was allayed by a mixture of wine and honey, which they termed *promulsio*, and the stomach being thus prepared, the supper itself was presented, after a short interval. The expense ridiculously bestowed on these entertainments, and the labor employed in collecting the rarest and most costly articles of food, exceed all belief. In this, as indeed in every other species of luxury, there was the most capricious refinement of extravagance. Suetonius mentions a supper given to Vitellius by his brother, in which, among other articles, there were 2000 of the choicest fishes (*lectissimorum piscium*,) 7000 of the most delicate birds—one dish, from its size and capacity, was named the *ægis*, or *shield of Minerva*. It was filled chiefly with the livers of *scari* (a delicate species of fish,) the brains of pheasants and peacocks, the tongues of parrots (imagined, probably, to be tender from their much chattering,) and the bellies of lampreys, brought from most distant provinces. This may serve as some specimen of the luxury of the Roman suppers.

Their entertainments were accompanied with every thing fitted to flatter the senses and to gratify the appetite. Musicians, male and female dancers, players of farce and pantomime, jesters and buffoons, and even gladiators exhibited whilst the guests sat at table. In order, if possible, to restrain such extreme luxury, a variety of sumptuary laws were promulgated from time to time, some of them limiting the number of dishes, others the number of guests, and others the expense to be bestowed on an entertainment, but all these attempts were completely unsuccessful. How, in effect, could it have been possible to bring back ancient simplicity, unless they could have also recalled ancient poverty? When a state has once become gorgeous opulent, the expenses of the rich must keep pace with their fortunes, otherwise the poor would want employment and subsistence. It is luxury that is silently levelling that inequality, or at least keeping fortunes in a constant fluctuation, giving vigour in this manner to all those various parts of the political machine, which would be otherwise apt to lose their strength and pliability for want of motion. We may wish that Rome had remained poor and virtuous, but, being once great and opulent, it was to have required an impossibility that she should not have been luxurious.

## CHAPTER V.

### On the Art of War among the Romans.

We have seen the Romans engaged for many ages in continual wars, first with the petty states of Italy, and afterwards with foreign nations. From the prodigious success which attended the arms of this remarkable people, and from the dominion which they accomplished, at length, over almost the whole of the known world, it is a necessary inference that they must have carried the knowledge of the art military to a higher degree of perfection than any other of the ancient nations: to whatever collateral or partial causes we may attribute the success of some of their warlike enterprises, the great and leading cause of those rapid and extensive conquests could have been nothing else than the excellence of their military discipline, compared to that of the nations whom they subdued. "It was not," says Vegetius, "to the superiority of numbers,

nor to superior courage in the field, that the Romans owed their victories; but it was by art and by discipline that they defeated those immense hosts of Gauls which poured down upon Italy: that they subdued the Spaniards, a hardier and more warlike race than themselves; the Africans, whose wealth furnished inexhaustible armies; and conquered even the Greeks, whose military abilities were for many ages superior to their own."

The nature of this military discipline, by which the Romans became masters of the world, is, therefore, an object extremely deserving of attention; and I shall endeavor here to give some idea of the state of the art of war, such as we find it to have been in the latter ages of the commonwealth, and in the first period of the history of the empire.

In a former chapter, in treating of the system of Roman education, we have taken notice of those exercises of the body to which all the youth of the republic were accustomed from their earliest infancy. By the constant practice of wrestling, boxing, launching the javelin, running, and swimming, they were inured from their cradle to that species of life which a soldier leads in the most active campaign in the field. They were accustomed to the military pace, that is, to walk twenty miles, and sometimes twenty-four, in *four* hours. During these marches they carried burdens of sixty pounds' weight; and the weapons with which they were armed were double the weight of those which were used in the actual field of battle.*

Every year after the election of the consuls, twenty-four military tribunes were chosen; fourteen from the order of the *Equites*, and ten from the body of the citizens. The people were then assembled by an edict of the consuls, commanding all who had attained the age of seventeen to appear in the area before the capitol on an appointed day. According to the number of legions which were to be formed, they appointed to each legion a certain number of tribunes. The tribes were then called out and divided into their proper centuries, and each century presented by rotation as many soldiers as there were legions intended to be raised. If there were four legions, each century took its turn in presenting four soldiers; and of these four, the tribunes of the first legion had the first choice of a man, the second the next, and so on: then four more were drawn out, and the second legion had the first choice. In the next selection, the third legion chose first, and in the following the fourth. Thus there was the utmost equality in the distribution of the citizens in the several legions.

The number of soldiers in the legion was various at different periods. At earlier times it consisted of 3000, of 4000, of 5000,

* Vegetius de Re Militari, c. 2.; and Josephus, de Bello Judaico, has given some very curious details of the Roman discipline.

and 6000; but under the emperors it might amount to even 10,000 or 11,000 men.

Among the ancient nations there were in general but two different arrangements of the troops in order of battle. The one was that of the *phalanx*, commonly used by the Greeks; the other was the disposition of the troops by *manipuli*, or companies, arranged in the form of a *chequer* or *quincunx*, which, after the war with Pyrrhus, became the ordinary arrangement of the Roman army, and was probably then first tried as the most commodious disposition against the attack of the elephants. In the order of the *phalanx*, the heavy-armed infantry were all ranged upon one continued line, with no other intervals than those which distinguished the great divisions. In the *quincunx* order, a number of small companies or platoons were ranged in three straight lines, one behind the other, with alternate spaces between them, equal to the front of each company.

In the first line were the *Hastati*, heavy-armed troops, who at first used long spears, but afterwards laid them aside for the *pilum*, or great javelin, and the sword and buckler. In the second line were the *Principes*, likewise armed with the pilum and sword and buckler: and in the third line were the *Triarii*, armed with the long spear, formerly used by the *hastati*, and chiefly intended to sustain the shock of the enemy's cavalry. On the flanks of the line of the hastati were placed the cavalry, likewise in detached *manipuli* or companies, armed only with a lance and javelin, pointed at the end, and a small buckler. Immediately before the hastati, and in the front of the line, were placed the *Velites*, or light-armed troops, who usually began the engagement, and, after maintaining a skirmishing fight for awhile, drew off to the rear, and retired behind the *triarii*, having the main body to come into action. After the *velites* had withdrawn, the *hastati* usually began the attack, by throwing the pilum, or great javelin, which was a ponderous spear of seven feet in length, and of such thickness as barely to be grasped in the hand. It could not be used at a distance, from its immense weight; but within the space of twenty or thirty yards its effect was dreadful. After the discharge of the pila, the *hastati* rushed on with the sword and buckler, which were now their only weapons. The Roman sword was about a foot and a half in length, two-edged, with a broad blade, tapering to a point, so as to serve both for cutting and thrusting.* What

* The kind and quality of weapons is of very great consequence in war. The Roman sword was a weapon of great power and efficacy. The Romans owned themselves inferior to the Cimbri in courage and martial heroism; and confessed that even their superior discipline could not have availed them against the prodigious impetuosity of the attacks of this people; but, on the other hand, the swords of the Cimbri were of bad temper compared to theirs. They often bent at the first stroke; and the soldier was obliged to straighten his sword with his foot before he could make a second stroke.

is singular is, that it was made of brass, but of so hard a composition as to shiver like steel. The sword and buckler were common to all the ranks of the infantry.*

The advantage of the chequer or quincunx arrangement of the legion was, that the Roman army could *three* times form the line of battle with fresh troops. Supposing the hastati to be foiled in their first onset, and even put to flight, the enemy found a new line of battle presented by the principes, who, using the same arms, first began with the terrible discharge of the pila, and then fought with the short sword. Meantime the hastati had time to rally, and to form a new line behind the triarii.

No form could be so admirably adapted as that of the quincunx for changing movements according to the disposition of the enemy's line. On advancing, for example, to meet such an army as the Gauls, ranged in the order of the phalanx, nothing was easier than to form a great front like that of the enemy, without any intervals, by bringing up the *principes* to fill the spaces betwixt the companies of the *hastati*. When, again, they had to do with an enemy less active, but to whom they did not wish to give an opportunity of insinuating themselves between the *manipuli*, they filled up the intervals with the *velites*, and kept the *principes* in the second line with the *triarii*, as a *corps de reserve*. In those engagements where the enemy had in their front a train of elephants, upon the advance of those animals, nothing more was requisite than for the *principes* to march to a side, and form themselves in a line with the *hastati* and *triarii*; in other words, to form themselves into columns, with open spaces between each column. Thus the elephants, persecuted and driven on by the *velites* found an entrance by these spaces between the columns, and passed through the legion without doing any mischief. This manœuvre was practised by Scipio at the battle of Zama, and by Regulus, in his engagement in Africa with Xantippus.

The *quincunx* disposition was for some ages the characteristic of the Roman legion, which scarcely used any other method of arrangement; but the Romans afterwards made many innovations upon the ancient tactic.† From the time of Marius the *quincunx* had gone into disuse, and Cæsar describes the legions in his wars as under a quite different form. The three manipuli of hastati, principes, and triarii composed a *cohort*, and were ranged not by intervals, but in a line behind each other—or in columns;—the triarii, armed with the long spears, being usually placed in the front. It is not easy to see in what respects this disposition excelled the former. From this period the tactic of the Romans

* For an account of the arms of the Roman legion, see Lipsius de Militia Romana, c. 3.

† See a very good account of the state of the art military under the emperors, in Gibbon's history, vol. i., c. 1.

was perpetually changing, and, in the opinion of the ablest judges, growing worse from age to age.*

At no time was the tactic of the Romans more excellent than during the Punic wars, and to that cause we may attribute their successes against an enemy so formidable as the Carthaginians, and commanded by such able generals. The chief talent of Hannibal lay in varying and adapting the arrangement of his army according to circumstances of local situation; and often striking out some new and unexpected disposition formed in the instant of action, which disconcerted all the ancient and regular plans of the Romans. Such was that most remarkable disposition of the Carthaginian army at the battle of Cannæ, which decided the fate of that important day, by the utter destruction of the Roman army. I shall endeavour to give an idea of this very curious disposition, of which Polybius has left a full account: and I select it for this reason, that it has been misunderstood and misrepresented by the Chevalier Folard, a very able writer on the art military, but who, from his ignorance of the Greek language, was obliged to rely on the Latin translation of a monk who knew nothing of the art of war. The errors of Folard have been fully pointed out in the *Mémoires Militaires* of M. Guichard.

Hannibal having passed the winter and spring in quarters, began the campaign by ravaging the whole country: and finding his army in want of provisions, he marched towards Cannæ, situated in a mountainous part of Apulia: a village where the Romans had established their magazines, and where they had brought all the military stores and provisions they had carried from Canusium. Hannibal took Cannæ by surprise: which, depriving the Romans of their stores, disconcerted their whole plan of operations. They could no longer pretend to harass and weary out the Carthaginians, but were obliged to think of giving them battle. The senate, in this emergency, sent a powerful reinforcement to the army, which now amounted to 80,000 men under two consuls, Varro and Æmilius: the latter a general of great experience, but cool and deliberate; the former rash, impetuous, and extremely obstinate.

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* We may learn from Vegetius the constitution of the Romans legion under Trajan and Hadrian. The heavy-armed infantry was then divided into ten cohorts, or fifty-five companies, under a correspondent number of tribunes and centurions. The first cohort, which had the post of honor and the custody of the eagle, consisted of 1105 soldiers, the remaining nine consisted each of 555. The number of infantry in the whole legion was, therefore, 6100 men. Their offensive arms were, 1st, the pilum; 2d, a light spear; 3d, the sword. The legion was usually drawn up eight deep, with a distance of three feet both between the files and ranks. The cavalry of the legion was divided into ten squadrons; the first, in proportion to the first cohort, consisting of 132 men, the rest only of 66—in all 726 horse. The horses of the cavalry were bred chiefly in Spain and Cappadocia. The arms of the men consisted of a helmet, an oblong shield, light boots, a coat of mail, a javelin, and a long broadsword. They borrowed afterwards from the barbarians the use of lances and iron maces.

Æmilius, sensible that the great superiority of Hannibal's army lay in his cavalry, wished to delay coming to an action till his situation should afford the best opportunity for the operations of infantry. Varro was for an immediate attack, and it being his turn to command, a pretty smart engagement ensued, which terminated doubtfully, but rather to the advantage of the Romans. Encouraged by this first success, they brooked with great impatience the cautious delays of Æmilius, who was still averse to a general engagement. The day following, when it was again the turn of Varro to command in chief, he ordered the army to take the field early in the morning, and to pass the river Aufidus, which lay between them and the Carthaginians. They passed without opposition, as Hannibal chose to rest every thing upon a very artful manœuvre, which he had planned, to be discovered only in the moment of engagement.

The usual disposition of the Carthaginians was that of the phalanx. Varro resolved to imitate this disposition, and to give his army a front similar to it. His ignorance of the art of war here led him into a great error. He neglected the advantages which the legion derived from the ordinary disposition of the quincunx, and endeavored to give a solidity and depth to his line, equal to that of the Carthaginians, not attending to this circumstance, that the arms of the legion were not suited to the close and compressed position, on which depended the strength of the phalanx; for the hastati and the principes could neither throw their pila with effect, nor manage their swords for want of room; and the triarii, ranged immediately behind and close upon the manipuli of the hastati, could not, with their long spears, be of the smallest service. Such, however, was Varro's disposition: he brought up the principes to fill the spaces between the companies of the hastati, and advanced the triarii, so as to join their companies to those of the hastati. On the right and left wing were the Roman cavalry, greatly inferior, as we have already observed, to those of the Carthaginians; and the velites or light infantry were ranged as usual in the front of the line.

Hannibal, whose army amounted to 40,000 foot and 10,000 horse, arranged the main body of his infantry in the close order of the *phalanx*; placing the best of his African heavy-armed troops to the right and left of the line, and in the centre the Gauls and Spaniards, armed only with the sword and buckler. On the right and left wings of his phalanx he posted the cavalry, immediately opposite to those of the enemy; and in the front of his line were ranged the Carthaginian light troops, in the same manner as those of the Romans. Having thus formed the great line of the phalanx, Hannibal ordered the Gauls and Spaniards in the centre to extend themselves forward from the main body in a semi-circular curve. This movement was concealed from the Romans, by the line of the Carthaginian light troops, and was not perceived till

after the skirmishing of the velites, when these troops in turn fell back behind the main body.

The action began by these light troops, and continued pretty long and obstinate, while in the meantime the Carthaginian cavalry attacked the Roman horse on both wings, and being infinitely superior to them in number, broke, dispersed, and cut them all to pieces. The signal was now given for the velites on both sides to fall back, and the Romans then for the first time, perceived the curve in the Carthaginian front, which, being far advanced, came in contact with, and was immediately attacked by, the centre of the Roman line. The Gauls and Spaniards who formed the curve, unable to sustain the impetuosity of this onset, gave way, as Hannibal had expected; while that part of the Roman line, impetuously pursuing its advantage, pushed forward in proportion as the enemy retreated, by which means the Roman line was bent in the middle into an angular form. This position was what Hannibal foresaw and wished for. The Gauls and Spaniards, supported behind by the velites, formed a sort of new concave curve; and the heavy-armed infantry, the strength of the Carthaginian army, who had hitherto remained inactive, were now marched up, so as to come in contact with the opposite part of the Roman line, which was hurrying on to pursue the advantage gained by the centre, but which, now that the Africans were advanced, found themselves inclosed like a wedge.

In the meantime the Carthaginian cavalry under the command of Asdrubal, having entirely cut to pieces the horse of the enemy, doubled the flanks of the Roman army, and poured down upon the rear. They were now inclosed and furiously attacked on every quarter. The contest was not of long duration. The Romans, pressed together, had no space to use their arms. It was, upon the part of the Carthaginians, an absolute massacre and butchery; 70,000 of the Romans were killed upon the spot, and 10,000 taken prisoners. Such was the celebrated battle of Cannæ, according to the idea given by M. Guichard, which is supported, in every particular, by the text of Polybius.

The disposition of the quincunx would in all probability have saved the Roman army, and disappointed the effect of Hannibal's artful manœuvre; which it is probable he had conceived only upon seeing the enemy in the order of the phalanx: for had the legions been formed in the order of the quincunx, only the first line of the hastati could have given into the snare which was laid for them, and the principes and triarii, entire and unbroken, must have been an overmatch for all that was opposed to them.

The quincunx, notwithstanding its great advantages, was, as I have already observed, disused in the times of the emperors, and consequently the arms of the soldiers must likewise have undergone considerable changes. In the time of Vegetius, that is to say, under Valentinian, and probably long before that period, the

pilum, the most formidable of the Roman weapons, was entirely laid aside, and a variety of weapons introduced, which are described by that author, but which were quite unknown during the perfection of the art of war among the Romans.

One most material part of the military science among the Romans was their art of intrenchment. It was to the perfection to which Cæsar carried this art, that he owed many of his greatest advantages in war. It seems to have been a maxim of his, that it was possible to make up for any inferiority in the number of his troops, by the additional strength of his intrenchments. Thus with 60,000 men he defended himself in his intrenchments before *Alexia*, while the lines of circumvallation were attacked by 240,000 Gauls, and the lines of countervallation by 80,000, without any effect.

These intrenchments were thrown up with amazing despatch. Every soldier upon his march carried along with him his palisade, which was a strong branch of a tree, having at one end three or four smaller branches sharpened to a point and hardened in the fire. When the square of the camp was traced out, each soldier, throwing aside his buckler, began to dig a ditch, ordinarily nine feet, but sometimes fourteen or fifteen feet in depth, and as much in width. The earth was thrown up upon the inside in the form of a rampart four or five feet in height, which was faced on the outside with those palisadoes or *stipites*, strongly fixed in the earth, and set so near each other that the branches, crossing obliquely, presented their points outwards, and thus formed a strong hedge of irregular points, which it was extremely difficult to pierce. On each side of the square of the camp was a gate or issue, where a strong guard was always posted, which no soldier could pass without leave, under pain of death.

When a city was besieged, it was customary for the Romans to divide their forces into several camps, encircling the place, and joined to each other by strong lines of circumvallation and countervallation. As the science of attack and defence of fortified towns was carried to a great degree of perfection, both by the Romans and the Greeks, I shall endeavour to give some idea of this branch of the military art among the ancients, concerning which several of the modern writers are very much at variance.

The Chevalier Folard, in his Commentary on Polybius, makes the military art of the ancients by far too complicated, and much more so than a plain construction of the words of his author, or, indeed, of any other of the ancient writers, will warrant.

In his treatise on the attack and defence of fortified places, he endeavours to prove, that, excepting the use of gunpowder and artillery, every operation used by modern engineers was known and practised by the ancients; and that, in particular, the mode of approach by parallels and trenches was in continual use. Yet it is very certain, as M. Guichard has abundantly shown, that

those authors who have written most minutely of the most important sieges, as Polybius, Cæsar, Arrian, and Josephus, and who express themselves in their details with very great perspicuity, give not the smallest countenance to such a notion.

The Romans observed two methods of proceeding in their sieges; the one was by means of the *agger*, a sort of terrace or mound of earth, on which they advanced their machines; and the other was by bringing up their machines to the foot of the walls without the help of such a terrace. The first was necessary only where the place was very strong, and the walls skilfully guarded and fortified. The method of proceeding against such fortified places was this:—The army, as I before observed, was divided into different quarters, separately intrenched around the city, which intrenchments communicated with each other by a line of contervallation drawn on the side next the town, and a line of circumvallation on the outside, to guard against attacks from the quarter of the country. Then the ground was chosen for the construction of the agger, or terrace, which was a lengthened mound of earth, beginning by a gentle slope, from one of the camps, and proceeding forward, gradually increasing in elevation as it approached the town. As this terrace was to be the stage from which all the engines of attack were to be played against the city, it was the object of the besieged to endeavor, by every possible means, to prevent the carrying on of this work. Stones, darts, and combustible matters were continually launched against the operators; and sometimes a mine was dug from the city, to pass under the front of the terrace, and scoop away its foundation.

The besiegers, on the other hand, guarded against these annoyances by protecting themselves, while at work, under covered sheds, termed *vineæ*, which were composed of hurdles, or wickerwork, covered with hides, and supported on stakes, which they moved along as the work advanced. The front of the terrace, where the workmen were chiefly employed, was protected either by a *testudo*, or covered pent-house, or simply by a curtain of skins, supported upon a large tree, laid transversely upon two others.

When the besiegers, under these covers, had brought the agger, or terrace, sufficiently near to the wall, they then advanced the engines of attack. The *catapultæ* and *balistæ* were ranged upon the terrace, at distances proportioned to their several projectile powers, and advanced or drawn back till they were made to bear upon the very spot which the besiegers intend to assail. The powers of these engines of attack almost exceed credibility. The *catapulta centenaria*, which was the smallest size of these machines, threw a weight of 100 pounds to the distance of 500 paces. The largest catapultæ threw stones of 1200 pounds' weight. The balistæ were constructed for throwing great and heavy darts. As to the particular construction of these machines

we can only form conjectures. The commentators on Vegetius have given several different forms of catapultæ and balistæ, but they are by far too complicated, and have a great deal of needless machinery of wheels, pulleys, axles, and levers. Much simpler contrivances might answer the same end, and be more easily managed. The form of the catapulta, given by M. Folard, is sufficiently simple, and corresponds well enough with the description in Vegetius.

A large lever is fixed at the lower end between two cables, very strongly twisted; the lever has, at the upper end, a hollow in the form of a dish, for receiving the stone or ball which is to be thrown. It is brought down to a horizontal position by means of this rope and hand-lever, which straightens the cable spring: and when let off by means of a catch, it returns to its position with prodigious force, and striking against the cross-bar at the top, the stone or ball is projected to a very great distance.

The balista, for throwing arrows, was, according to the idea of M. Folard, of a construction considerably different, though depending on the same mechanical principles with the catapulta; yet, from the promiscuous use of the two terms, which we often find made by the ancient authors, I think it is not at all improbable that the same machine might have been so contrived as to serve both for stones and arrows: for instance, nothing more was necessary than to fix a sort of long trough or groove, horizontally projecting from the cross-beam at the top, in which the arrows should be placed, with their ends a little advanced beyond the line of the cross-beam. It is evident, that when the spring-lever struck against the beam, so as to throw out a stone from the dish, the arrows in the groove, receiving the whole force of the stroke, would be discharged with great violence at the same time.

But these engines, the catapultæ and balistæ, though most formidable in their effects, were incapable of making a breach in the walls of a strongly fortified city. The only engine capable of producing this effect was the *battering ram;* and the whole contrivances of the *agger*es, or terraces, towers, *testudines*, *vineæ*, or covered galleries, had no other object than to facilitate the approach of the ram, which, if it was once effected, and the engine had free space to play, all ancient authors are agreed that it was decisive of the fate of the town. No wall, however strong, was capable of resisting its force. The object, therefore, of the besiegers was, by means of the catapultæ and balistæ, and by the command which the elevation of the terrace gave them, to clear the walls of their defenders, and to obstruct the play of those engines which the besieged were continually working to prevent the approach of the ram, or to weaken its force; so that, as soon as the besiegers from the terrace were able to silence the batteries from the walls, the ram, coming up in security under the cover of a testudo, began to play without intermission till the breach was effected. It consisted

of an enormous beam of wood, armed at the one end with a head of iron, and suspended so as to hang in *equilibrio*, from a cross-beam of the testudo, or pent-house.

The besiegers, besides employing the contrivances of aggeres, testudines, vineæ, and battering rams, constructed frequently movable towers of such a height as to overtop the walls of the city; and these towers answered a variety of purposes. The under part of the tower served for a testudo to a battering ram, which played under its cover, while on the top were planted archers and slingers to clear the ramparts of those who endeavored to counteract the operation of the ram by letting down great beams, chains, and hoops to destroy its equilibrium, and impede its motion. These movable towers were frequently so constructed as to let down, from the side next to the city, a platform to serve as a bridge from the tower to the top of the walls, by means of which an access was gained for the besiegers into the city.

For the defence of the city, the besieged employed the same engines used by the besiegers for the discharge of stones and darts, the catapulæ and ballistæ. The walls were carefully manned on every quarter where an attack was meditated, and every device employed for annoying the besiegers, regarding their operations, and preventing the approach of the ram to the walls. The gates, which the besiegers generally attempted to burn down, were defended from fire by covering them with iron plates or with raw skins. The wall above the gates was likewise bored with perpendicular openings through which the besieged could pour water to extinguish them if set on fire. In the inside was a portcullis, suspended by iron chains, which, when a small body of the enemy had forced the way through the gates, the besieged could suddenly let down, and thus despatch them when they were separated from the rest of the assailants.

Such were the most ordinary methods employed by the ancients in the attack and defence of fortified towns. I speak not of the Romans alone; for they borrowed the greater part of their knowledge, in this branch of the military art, from the Greeks, among whom it was early reduced to a system. If we compare the description which Josephus has given of the siege of Jotapat by the Romans in the reign of Vespasian, with the detail given us by Thucydides of the siege of Platea, which happened about 600 years before that period, we shall find the same method both of attack and defence. They continued to be in general use down to modern times; till the invention of gunpowder made a great change in almost every part of the art military.

It was not till the latter ages of the commonwealth, that naval warfare was at all practised by the Romans. Till the first Punic war, the Romans never had any equipment of ships for the purposes of war. A Carthaginian galley which was stranded on the coast of Italy, served them, as formerly observed, for a model;

and it is said, with a very moderate regard to probability, that, in the space of two months, this resolute and active people equipped a fleet of one hundred galleys of five banks of oars, and twenty of three banks. The construction of these vessels, and particularly the disposition of the different ranges, or banks of oars, has given occasion to much speculation among the moderns. The difficulty of supposing five different lines or orders of rowers disposed one above another, has occasioned the conjectures of some authors, that the expression of *triremes* and *quinqueremes* meant no more than that there were in some galleys three men to an oar, and in others five. But the expressions of the ancient writers clearly show that there were different ranks which sat above each other. Nothing can be more ridiculous than the importance which men of learning assume to themselves from that parade of erudition, which they sometimes choose to display on the most insignificant topics. Meibomius has written a treatise upon the structure of the ancient *triremis*, in which, from a variety of quotations from ancient authors, and critical disquisitions upon the meaning of some of their technical phrases, he shows that Scaliger, Salmasius, and the ablest of the modern critics, were totally in the dark as to the true sense of those authors; and so highly does he value himself upon his discoveries, that he dedicates his book, *Regibus, Principibus, Rebus-publicisque Maris Interni accolis*; "To all the kings, princes, and states, whose territories lie upon the Mediterranean." His treatise again has been answered by Opelius, and thus the dispute goes on to the length of folio volumes to settle this important point, whether the *thranites*, one order of rowers, sat uppermost, and the *thalamites* undermost, or whether these last were above, and the former below.*

* The late Lieutenant-General Melville, who united a taste for antiquities to great professional knowledge, has some curious ideas upon this subject of the structure of the ancient galleys. He conjectures that the waist part of the vessels rose obliquely above the water's edge, with an angle of forty-five degrees or near it; that upon the inner sides of this waist part, the seats of the rowers, each about two feet in length, were fixed horizontally in rows, with no more space between each seat and those on all sides of it, than should be found necessary for the free movements of men when rowing together. The *quincunx*, or chequer order, would afford this advantage in the highest degree possible; and in consequence of the combination of two obliquities, those inconveniences, which, according to the common idea of the regulation of such galleys, must have attended the disposition of so great a number of rowers, are entirely removed. In 1773, the General caused the fifth part of the waist of a *quinquereme* to be erected in the back yard of his house, in Great Pulteney Street. This model contained with sufficient ease, in a very small place, thirty rowers in five tiers of six men in each lengthways, making one-fifth part of the rowers on each side of a *quinquereme*, according to Polybius, who assigns three hundred for the whole complement, besides one hundred and twenty fighting men. This construction, the advantages of which appeared evident to those who examined it, serves to explain many difficult passages of the Greek and Roman writers concerning naval matters. The General's discovery is confirmed by ancient monuments. The collection at Portici contains ancient paintings of several galleys, one or two of which, by representing the stern

Besides the *longæ naves*, or ships of war, such as those we have mentioned, the Romans made use of small vessels called *liburnicæ*, which were serviceable during a naval engagement in carrying the general's or admiral's orders from one part of the squadron to the other. They were so called from the Liburni, a people of Illyria, who followed a piratical way of life, and used small, quick-sailing vessels. In a naval engagement the general himself, in one of these *liburnicæ*, was wont to sail through the fleet, and give his orders for the dispositions and motions of the squadron.

In their naval engagements the ancients had no means of assailing each other at a distance but with the javelin; nor had they any contrivance for disabling the vessels of the enemy, unless in some of their largest ships, which were constructed with towers on their stern, from which they could use the ballista or catapulta. The *corvus*, or grappling machine, used by the Romans, served to fasten the ships to each other during action, while the men were engaged with the sword and buckler or with spears. Under the emperors the Romans maintained their distant conquests not only by their arms but by their fleets, which were disposed in all the quarters of the empire, and preserved a fixed station, as did the legions.*

## CHAPTER VI.

### Reflections arising from a view of the Roman History during the Commonwealth.

In the view which I have endeavored to give of the rise and the progress of the Roman republic, and of the states of Greece previously, I have been less attentive through the whole to a minute and scrupulous detail of events, than studious to mark

part, show both the obliquity of the sides, and the rows of oars reaching to the water; and many ancient basso relievos show the oars issuing chequer-wise from the sides. See Gillies' History of Greece, cap. 5.

* Augustus stationed two permanent fleets at Ravenna, on the Adriatic, and at Misenum, in the Bay of Naples, to command the two seas, each squadron containing several thousand marines. They consisted chiefly of the lighter vessels called *Liburnica*. A very considerable armament was likewise stationed at Frejus, on the coast of Provence, and another was appointed to guard the Euxine. To these may be added the fleet which preserved the communication between Gaul and Britain, and a number of vessels constantly maintained on the Rhine and Danube.

those circumstances which show the spirit and genius of those remarkable nations, and illustrate those great moral and political truths which it is the most valuable province of history to point out and inculcate.

To consider history only as a magazine of facts, arranged in the order of their dates, is nothing more than the indulgence of a vain and childish curiosity; a study which tends to no valuable or useful purpose. The object of the study of history is one of the noblest of the pursuits of men. It is to furnish the mind with the knowledge of that great art on which depends the existence, the preservation, the happiness and prosperity of states and empires.

That the connection of politics with morality is inseparable, the smallest acquaintance with history is sufficient to show.

No nation has afforded a more striking example, than the Romans have done, of the necessity of *good morals to the preservation of political liberty and the happiness of the people*. This is a doctrine of so much importance, that it cannot be too seriously considered nor attended to. Unlike, in this respect, to many other political truths which are interesting only to statesmen, and those who conduct the machine of government, this truth is of importance to be known and considered by every single individual of the community; because the error or fault is in the *conduct of individuals*, and can only be amended by a conviction brought home to the mind of every private man, that the reformation must be begun by his own virtuous and patriotic endeavors.

It will, therefore, be no unprofitable task if I shall endeavor, from the history of the Roman republic, and likewise from that of the states of Greece, which were before under our consideration, to throw together in one view such striking facts as tend to exemplify and illustrate this great and useful lesson, of which the application is not confined to any age or country, but is equally suited to the subject of a *monarchy*, and of a *republic*; equally important to the modern Briton, as it was to the ancient Greek or Roman. For in truth, no principle is more false or more pernicious than that assumed by some political writers, that virtue is *essentially necessary to republics alone*. Virtue is necessary, and indispensably necessary, to the existence of every government, whatever be its form; and no human institution where men are assembled together to act in concert, however limited be their numbers, or however extensive, however wise may be their governors, however excellent their laws, can possess any measure of duration without that powerful cement, virtue in the principles and morals of the people. *Quid leges sine moribus vanæ proficiunt*, is a sentiment equally applicable to all governments whatever.

The love of liberty, or the passion for national freedom, is a noble, a disinterested, and a virtuous feeling. Where this feeling is found to prevail in any great degree, it is a proof that the manners of that community are yet pure and unadulterated; for cor-

ruption of manners infallibly extinguishes the patriotic spirit. In a nation confessedly corrupted, there is often found a prevading cry for liberty, which is heard the loudest among the most profligate of the community; but let us carefully distinguish *that* spirit from *virtuous patriotism*. Let us examine the morals, the private manners of the demagogue who preaches forth the love of liberty; remark the character and examine the lives of those who listen with the greatest avidity to his harangues, and re-echo his vociferations—and let this be our criterion to judge of the principle which actuates them.* The aversion to restraint assumes the same external appearance with the love of liberty; but this criterion will enable us to distinguish the reality from the counterfeit. In fact the spirit of liberty and a general corruption of manners are so totally averse and repugnant to each other, that it is utterly impossible they should have even the most transitory existence in the same age and nation. When Thrasybulus delivered Athens from the thirty tyrants, liberty came too late; the manners of the Athenians were irretrievably corrupted; licentiousness, avarice, and debauchery had endured a mortal disease. When Antigonus and the Achæan states restored liberty to the Spartans, they could not enjoy or preserve it: the spirit of liberty was utterly extinct, for they were a corrupted people. The liberty of Rome could not be recovered by the death of Cæsar; it had gone for ever with her virtuous manners.

On the other hand, while virtue remains in the manners of the people, no national misfortune is irretrievable, nor any political situation so desperate, that hope may not remain for a favorable change. If the morals of the people be entire, the spirit of patriotism pervading the ranks of the state will excite to such exertions as may soon recover the national honor. Of this truth the Roman state afforded at one time a most striking example. When Hannibal was carrying every thing before him in Italy, when the Roman name was sunk so low that the allies of the republic were daily dropping off, and the Italian states seemed to stand aloof, and leave her to her fate, there was in the manners of the people, and in that patriotic ardor which can only exist in an uncorrupted age, a spirit of reconvalescence which speedily operated a most wonderful change of fortune. Of all the allied states, Hiero, king of Syracuse, manifested the greatest political foresight. When solicited to forsake the Romans in this hour of their adversity, he stood firm to the alliance. He saw, that, although sunk under the pressure of temporary misfortune, patriotism was still alive and

* "That man," says Æschines, "who is an unnatural father, and a hater of his own blood, can never be a worthy leader of the people; the soul that is insensible to the tenderest domestic relations, can never feel the more general bond of patriotic affection: he who in private life is vicious, can never be virtuous in the concerns of the public."

the constitution of the republic was still sound; and he rightly concluded that she would recover her strength and splendor. So likewise at Carthage, when the intelligence arrived of the great victory gained over the Romans at Cannæ;—the most sanguine and short-sighted manifested the highest exultation, and concluded that Rome for certain was in the possession of Hannibal, *et quod actum erat de republicâ Romanâ:* but the wiser sort judged far otherwise; and, hearing of those intrepid resolutions of the senate upon that great calamity, sagaciously foresaw that this misfortune would but rouse to a more desperate resistance, and accumulate the whole strength of the Romans, of which hitherto there had been only partial exertions. The lapse of a hundred and forty years, however, made a prodigious change in the Roman character. In the time of Marius and Sylla, a defeat like Cannæ would have been decisive of the fate of Rome. Had Hiero lived in the time of the Second Triumvirate, he would have abandoned the republic to her fate, which he must have seen to be inevitable.

The force of the torrent of corruption in the degeneracy of a nation is never so sensibly perceived, so strongly felt, as when one man of uncommon virtue makes a signal endeavor to oppose it. If his example, though ineffectual to excite a general imitation, is yet strong enough to attract applause, there is still some faint hope that *that* nation or people is not beyond the possibility of recovery. Thus, when, after the defeat of Antiochus, and the plunder of his kingdom, the virtuous Scipio withstood every temptation to accumulate wealth,—temptations judged so powerful, that it was thought impossible he should have resisted them, and he underwent on that ground a calumnious prosecution,—the conduct of that great man on this occasion excited universal admiration; a proof that, amidst great corruption, public virtue was not yet *extinct*. In that age, a few such men as Scipio might have postponed the approaching ruin of their country. But when things have once proceeded to that depth of degeneracy, that the example of one virtuous man strenuously resisting the torrent cannot command even a sterile applause, but is received with scorn and contempt, then is that nation gone beyond all hopes, and no human power can prevent its hastening to ruin. A very few years from the time of the last mentioned example had produced this fatal difference in the manners of the Romans. When the first triumvirate, Pompey, Cæsar, and Crassus, had gone such lengths towards the destruction of the Roman liberty, and had so debauched the manners of the people, that candidates for offices, instead of depending on their merits or services, openly bought the suffrages of the people, and, improving in corruption, instead of purchasing single votes, went directly to the triumviri and paid down the ready money; when all was going headlong to perdition, the younger Cato attempted to impose some check upon this torrent of wickedness. What was the consequence?—He only procured to

himself the contempt and hatred of both rich and poor, the former detesting the man who tempted them to buy the liberty of their country, and the latter execrating him who would have prevented them from making money by the sale of it.

Whether it was the intercourse with the Carthaginians, whose want of probity and of national faith had passed into a proverb; or whether it was the actual corruption of the manners of the Romans themselves, a people now flushed with the arrogance that attends repeated conquests—it is not easy to determine; but it is certain that the national character of the Romans seems to have undergone its most remarkable change for the worse, from the time of the destruction of their rival, Carthage. The last Punic war itself was prompted, as we have seen, by a most mean, ungenerous, and dastardly spirit in the Romans. But after the fall of Carthage, some of the public measures became stained with the most horrible perfidy. Their conduct to Viriathus, a Spanish chief, of whom they first purchased an ignominious peace, and afterwards broke it by hiring assassins to murder him: and their shameful treachery and cruelty to the people of Numantia, whom they basely attacked, murdered, and exterminated, while they thought themselves safe under the sanction of a most solemn treaty.—these are instances marking so total a depravation of national character, as could be followed by nothing else but the ruin of the state that could furnish them. Accordingly, we find similar instances following each other in the quickest succession, from this time down to the entire subversion of the commonwealth.

When the passion of avarice had, as at this time, pervaded all the ranks of the state, it is not wonderful that the public measures should be in the greatest degree mean and disgraceful. The ambition of conquest was now little else than the desire of rapine and plunder. If the allies of the state were opulent, the Romans considered their wealth as a sufficient reason for dissolving all treaties between them, and holding them as a lawful object of conquest. Thus the kingdoms of Numidia, of Pergamus, of Cappadocia, of Bithynia, separate sovereignties bound to the allegiance of the Romans by the most solemn treaties, were invaded as if they had been ancient and natural enemies, and reduced to the condition of conquered provinces. The senate made a kind of traffic of thrones and governments, selling them openly to the highest bidder.

It is curious, in this state of the Roman manners, to observe the pretences sometimes alleged for going to war, when any country offered a tempting object to their avidity and rapaciousness.

Manlius, the consul, undertook an expedition against the Gallo-Grecians or Gallatians, a people of Asia Minor. It was alleged that the war was unjust, for they had given the Romans no sort of provocation. But the general urged in excuse, that they were a wicked and profligate people, and that some of their ancestors,

a few centuries before, had plundered the temple of Delphi. The apology was admitted, and Manlius was decreed the honor of a triumph for having avenged this horrible sacrilege. Justin, the historian, informs us of a similar instance. The Romans engaging along with the Acarnanians, against the people of Ætolia, had no other excuse to allege for their interference in this quarrel, than that the Acarnanians had performed a signal act of friendship to their ancestors about a thousand years before—which was, that they had joined the other Grecian states *in sending troops to the siege of Troy!*

In the last ages of the commonwealth, the generals who commanded in those military expeditions, from a selfish and ambitious policy, studied to increase this prevailing depravity. They allowed their soldiers to plunder with impunity, and countenanced every species of dissoluteness of manners, in order to gain the affection of the troops. "Lucius Sylla," says Sallust, "that he might gain the attachment of his army, entirely corrupted their ancient simplicity of manners." It was under him, in his Asiatic expeditions, that the Roman soldiers first became addicted to debauchery and drinking. There also they learned an affectation of taste for paintings and for statues; a taste which in them led to private theft, to public rapine, and even to sacrilege. The vanquished nations had nothing to expect from such conquerors, but to be stripped and plundered of all they possessed.

The shocking corruption of which Jugurtha made the experiment upon all the ranks of the state—the facility which he found in screening himself from the punishment of his atrocious crimes, first by bribing the Roman senate, and afterwards by corrupting the generals who were sent against him—are scarcely credible to those who have been accustomed to consider the Romans, in the early times of the republic, as an heroic, a free, and a virtuous people. But the Romans were now weary of calm and rational happiness; their virtues were an incumbrance; and they saw no value in their liberty, but in so far as they could make money by the sale of it. Some few, who yet possessed a remnant of virtue, either from motives of personal safety, or perhaps ashamed to live in such society, voluntarily banished themselves from their country. The scenes that followed under Sylla, Cinna, and the two triumvirates, were the last struggles which terminate a violent and mortal disease.

That the extinction of the liberties of the Roman people, and the downfall of the commonwealth, were owing to the corruption of the Roman manners, there cannot be the smallest doubt; nor is it difficult to point out in a few words the causes of that corruption. The extent of the Roman dominions towards the end of the republic proved fatal to its virtues. While confined within the bounds of Italy, every Roman soldier, accustomed to a life of hardship, of frugality and of industry, placed his chief happiness

in contributing in war to the preservation of his country, and in peace to the maintenance of his family by honest labor. A state of this kind, which knows no intervals of ease or of indolence, is a certain preservative of good morals, and a sure antidote against every species of corruption. But the conquest of Italy paved the way for the reduction of foreign nations; for an immense acquisition of territory—a flood of wealth—and an acquaintance with the manners, the luxuries, and the vices of the nations whom they subdued. The Roman generals, instead of returning as formerly, after a successful war, to the labors of the field, the occupations of industry, and a life of temperance and frugality, were now the governors of kingdoms and of provinces. In these they lived with the splendor of sovereign princes, and returning after the period of their command, to Rome, brought with them immense treasures, which they had accumulated by every species of rapine and oppression. Their importance at home was now signalized by a desire of obtaining dominion over their country similar to that which they had exercised in their province. Utterly impatient of the restraints of a subject, they could be satisfied with nothing less than sovereignty. The armies they had commanded abroad, debauched by the plunder of kingdoms, and attached by selfish interest to the men who had countenanced and indulged them in rapine, were completely disposed to support them in all their schemes of ambition. It was now only necessary to secure the favor of the people of Rome, which the increasing taste for luxury presented an easy method of obtaining. Games and shows were exhibited at the most enormous expense, and festivals prepared for the populace, with every refinement of luxurious magnificence; and the Roman people, in the emphatic words of Juvenal,

> ——— "duas tantum res anxius optat,
> Panem et Circenses,"

(that is, anxious only for food and games,) easily abandoned their liberty to the man who went the farthest in indulging them in their sensual gratifications. Rivals in the same path of ambition divided this worthless populace into parties. "The public assemblies," as M. Montesquieu has well remarked, "were now so many conspiracies against the state, and a tumultuous crowd of seditious wretches were dignified with the title of *comitia*. The authority of the people and their laws were, in these times of universal anarchy, no more than a chimera." With a people thus fated to destruction, in a government thus irretrievably destroyed by the decay of those springs which once supported it, it was a matter of very little consequence by the hands of what particular individuals it was finally extinguished. We have seen who were the active instruments in that dissolution, and the measures by which they accomplished it, and it is needless here to recapitulate them.

From a consideration of the rise and fall of the states of Greece and Rome, a political question has arisen, which in this place it is of some importance to examine, and which the preceding observations, I believe, may, in a great measure, assist us in solving.

There is no maxim more common among the political writers, nor any which is generally received with less hesitation, than this, that the constitution of every empire, like that of the human body, has necessarily its successive periods of growth, maturity, decline, and extinction. The fate of all the ancient nations whose annals are recorded in history has led to the adopting of this as an axiom, for which, independent of experience, it is not very easy to assign a reasonable foundation.

All conclusions from analogy should be cautiously weighed. The mind of man, pleasing itself with its own sagacity in discovering relations not obvious to a common observer, has a great propensity, in comparing facts, to reduce them to general laws; and from the coincidence and even resemblance of a few striking particulars, is apt very hastily to conclude that a perfect analogy holds between them. This mode of reasoning is extremely fallacious, and is never more to be suspected than when an analogy is attempted to be drawn from physical truths to moral ones.

The human body, we know, contains within itself the principles of decay. It undergoes a perpetual change from time. The bodily organs, at first weak and imperfect, attain gradually to their perfect strength. At this period they cannot be arrested, but are subject to a decline equally perceptible with their progress to perfection. But this is not the case with the body politic. The springs of its life do not necessarily undergo a perpetual change from time; nor is it subject to the influence of any principle of corruption which may not be checked and even eradicated by wholesome laws. "If," says the eloquent Rousseau, "Sparta and Rome have gone to destruction, what government or constitution can hope for perpetuity?" True, it may be answered, Sparta and Rome *have* gone to destruction; but was this the effect of a law of nature, or does it follow that since these two states, excellent indeed in many respects in their constitution, are now extinct, all others must exhibit a similar progress? From the history of ancient nations, it is not difficult for a reader of discernment to discover and point out the principle of corruption which has led to their dissolution; and a good politician can see what remedy could have been effectual to check or to eradicate the evil. Sparta enjoyed a longer period of prosperous duration than any other state of antiquity. So long as her original constitution remained inviolate, which was for the period of several centuries, the Lacedæmonians were a virtuous, a happy, and a respectable people. Frugality, we know, was the soul of Lycurgus's establishment. The luxurious disposition of a single citizen introduced the poison of corruption. Lysander, whose military talents raised

his country to a supremacy over all the Grecian states, sent home, after the conquest of Athens, the wealth of that luxurious republic to Lacedæmon. It was debated in the senate whether it should be received: the best and wisest of that order, considered it as a most dangerous breach of the institutions of their legislator; but others were dazzled with the lustre of that gold, with which they were, till now, unacquainted, and the influence of Lysander prevailed for its reception. It was decreed to receive the money for the use of the state, while it was at the same time declared a capital crime for any of it to be found in the possession of a private citizen—a weak resolution, which in effect was consecrating, and making respectable in the eyes of the citizens, that very thing of which it was necessary to forbid them to aspire at the possession.

Thus did corruption begin its first attack upon the constitution of Lycurgus. But was this corruption a necessary or an unavoidable evil? Was Sparta come to that period, when a Lysander *must* of necessity have arisen, whose disposition was adverse to the spirit of her constitution, and whose influence was sufficiently powerful to effect that breach of her fundamental laws? A single voice in the senate, perhaps, decided the fate of that illustrious commonwealth. Had there been one other virtuous man, whose negative would have caused the rejection of that pernicious measure, Sparta might have continued to exist for ages, frugal, warlike, virtuous, and uncorrupted. Or again, even supposing corruption once introduced, was it utterly impossible to find a remedy for the disease? Might not a second Lycurgus have arisen, who could check that evil in its infancy against which the first was able so well to guard?

The beginning of the corruption of the Roman state, we have seen, may be dated from the time that the territory was extended beyond the bounds of Italy. The fatal effects of enlarging the empire were certainly not foreseen; or we must conclude that the same parties, who were so jealous of the smallest attacks upon the liberty of the people, would have been doubly anxious to have guarded against measures which led, though remotely, to the extinction of all liberty and the overthrow of the constitution; and had the effect of these measures been foreseen, a few wise and virtuous politicians might have prevented this being adopted. This, at least, we may say, that if, by a fundamental law of the state, the Roman empire had been confined to Italy, and it had been a capital crime for any Roman citizen to have proposed to carry the arms of the republic beyond the limits of that country, the republic might have preserved its constitution inviolate for many ages beyond the period of its actual duration.

Several ingenious men have exercised their talents in framing the plan of such a political constitution as should best promote the happiness of the citizens, while it possessed the greatest possible stability. We lay out of the question such ideal governments as

the republic of Plato, the Utopia of More, and some modern theories no less chimerical, because they proceed upon the basis of amending the nature of man, and eradicating all his evil passions. The systems of Harrington, however, in his "Oceana," and of Mr. Hume in his "Idea of a perfect Commonwealth," have been considered as more worthy of the attention of mankind, as resting upon the basis of human nature such as it is, and without assuming for their foundation any wonderful improvement either of the moral or intellectual nature of our species. Yet in so far as either of these systems has been partially introduced into practice, we have very little reason to subscribe to any eulogium upon their merits. Harrington, who wrote his "Oceana," during a period of the commonwealth of England, was so intoxicated with that newly erected system of government, as agreeing in many respects with his own theory, that he boldly ventured to pronounce it impossible that monarchy should ever be re-established in England. Yet his book was scarcely published, when the nation, weary to death of an experiment which, under the mask of freedom, had loaded them with tenfold tyranny, unanimously recurred to their ancient monarchical constitution.

With respect to Mr. Hume's "Idea of a perfect Commonwealth," it were, perhaps, not difficult to show that, instead of simplifying the machine of government, it renders it so complicated, that it would be impossible for it to proceed either with that regularity or despatch which is often most essential to the mass of public measures. If, for example, in Mr. Hume's senate of one hundred members, there should be only ten dissentient voices to the passing of a law, that law is to be sent back to be debated and canvassed by no less than 11,000 county representatives. In the same manner, if there should be but five of the one hundred senators who approve of a law, while ninety-five disapprove of it, those five have a right to summon the 11,000 county representatives, and take their sense of the matter. It surely requires little political judgment to pronounce that such a constitution is utterly unfit for the regulation of an extended or populous empire; yet Great Britain is the subject upon which he supposes in theory that the experiment is to be tried. God forbid it ever should! Had this experiment been proposed in reality, Mr. Hume himself would have been the first man to have resisted it. His genuine sentiments of such experiments he has given in the words of sound sense and wisdom. "It is not with forms of government," says he, "as with other artificial contrivances, where an old engine may be rejected if we can discover another more accurate or commodious, or where trials may be safely made, even though the success be doubtful. An established government has an infinite advantage by that very circumstance of its being established; the bulk of mankind being governed by authority, not reason, and never attributing authority to any thing that has not the recom-

mendation of antiquity. To tamper, therefore, in this affair," says he, "and to try experiments, merely upon the credit of supposed argument and philosophy, can never be the part of a wise magistrate, who will bear a *reverence* to what carries the marks of age: though he may attempt some improvements for the public good, yet he will adjoin the innovations as much as possible to the ancient fabric, and preserve entire the chief pillars and supports of the constitution."

Time, which brings improvement to every science, has undoubtedly contributed much to the advancement of political knowledge. Among the chief advantages derived from the art of printing is that of fixing and perpetuating all human acquirements in science, which before that invention, either perished with their authors, or if preserved by writing, were sparingly communicated even in the country which produced them, seldom reached beyond it, and were often in the course of a few generations irretrievably lost. By the art of printing, the opinions of some of the greatest of the ancient philosophers and politicians, and, what is much more valuable, the great outlines of the history of the most remarkable states of antiquity, their laws, their manners, and customs, are now committed to perpetual records, open to all nations, and familiar to the knowledge of every individual who has enjoyed the most ordinary education.

It is from this knowledge of the accumulated experience of ages, that not only men, but nations, may derive the most important lessons. History will inform us, that some nations have enjoyed, during the course of many ages, an unvarying and uninterrupted prosperity; while others have been destined to a short, unfortunate, and despicable mediocrity. History will inform us, that the greatest empires which have existed on the earth are now sunk into oblivion; that Persia, Egypt, Greece, Macedonia, and Rome, have fallen themselves, like the petty states which they overwhelmed in their conquest. But while we contemplate their changes of fortune, their prosperity, their degrees, their revolutions, and their final catastrophe, must these vicissitudes be considered only as the effect of a blind fatality? Can they furnish us with no other conclusion than that every human institution must yield to the hand of time, against which neither wisdom nor virtue can ultimately afford a defence? No, certainly: every nation of antiquity has met with that fate which either its own political institutions, or the operation of foreign circumstances, must necessarily have induced. "Accustom your mind," said the excellent Phocion to Aristias, "to discern in the prosperity of nations that recompense which the Author of Nature has affixed to the practice of virtue; and in their adversity, the chastisement which he has thought proper to bestow on vice." No state ever ceased to be prosperous, but in consequence of having departed from those institutions to which she owed her prosperity.

The ancient political writers, in speaking on the best form of a political establishment, held this as a great *desideratum*, that a government should possess within itself a power of periodical reformation; a capacity of reforming from time to time all abuses; of checking every overgrowth of power in any one branch of the body politic; and, at short intervals of time, winding up, as it were, the springs of the machine, and bringing the constitution back to its first principles. To the want of this power of periodical reformation in the ancient constitutions, which was ineffectually endeavored to be supplied by such contrivances as the *ostracism* and *petalism*, we may in a great measure attribute their decline and extinction; for in these governments, when the balance was once destroyed by an increase of power in any one branch, the evil grew worse from day to day, and at length, was utterly irremediable, unless by a revolution or entire change of the political system. Happily for us Britons, that which was a desideratum in the ancient governments is with us realized; that power of reforming all abuses, and even of making alterations and amendments as time and circumstances require, which is perfectly agreeable to the spirit of our constitution, has given us an unspeakable advantage, both over all the states of antiquity, and over every other government among the moderns. But let us not abuse this advantage, or convert what is a wholesome remedy into a poison. There are seasons when political reforms are safe, expedient, and desirable; there are others when none but the most rash empiric would prescribe their application. If the minds of a people are violently agitated by political enthusiasm, kindled by the example of other nations actually in a state of revolution,—if that class of the people who derive their subsistence from bodily labor and industry are artfully rendered discontented with their situation, inflamed by pictures of imaginary grievances, and stimulated by delusive representations of immunities to be acquired, and blessings to be obtained, by new political systems, in which they themselves are to be legislators and governors,—if there should be a time when the common people are taught to believe that a subordination of ranks and conditions is contrary to the laws of God and nature, and that the inequality they perceive in the possessions of the rich and poor is a proof of the diseased state of the body politic,—if such should be the delusions of the community, which the traitorous designs of others aim at rendering general; in such a crisis it cannot be the part of true patiotism to attempt the reform or amendment even of confessed imperfections. The hazard of the experiment at such a time is apparent to all rational and reflecting men. It is *then* we feel it our *duty* to resist *all* attempts at innovation—to cherish with gratitude the blessings we enjoy, and quietly await a more favorable opportunity of gently and easily removing our small imperfections—trivial, indeed, when balanced against that high measure of political happiness of which the community at large is possessed.

# BOOK THE FIFTH.

## CHAPTER I.

Fate of the Roman Republic decided by the Battle of Actium—Reign of Augustus—Birth of our Saviour JESUS CHRIST—Tiberius—Crucifixion of our Saviour—Caligula—Claudius—Nero—Galba—Otho—Vitellius—Vespasian—Titus—Domitian—Nerva—Trajan—Adrian.

THE battle of Actium decided, as we have above seen, the fate of the Roman republic; and Octavius, now hailed by the splendid title of Augustus, was master of the Roman empire. We have seen this singular person raise himself to the highest summit of power, without a tincture of those manly and heroic virtues which generally distinguish the authors of important revolutions. Those fortunate circumstances which concurred to promote his elevation; the adoption by Julius Cæsar, the weakness of Lepidus, the infatuation of Mark Antony, the treachery of Cleopatra, and, perhaps, more than all, his own insinuating flattery and duplicity of conduct—were shortly hinted at as the great instruments in the good fortune of Augustus.

Possessing that sagacity which enabled him to discern distinctly what species of character would please the people, he had, in addition to this, all that versatility of genius which enabled him to assume it; and so successfully did he follow out this idea, that to those unacquainted with the former conduct of the man, nothing was now discernible but the qualities which were indicative of goodness, and virtue, and munificence. The fate of Cæsar warned him of the insecurity of an usurped dominion; and we shall see him, whilst he studiously imitated the clemency of his great predecessor, affect a much greater degree of respect for the pretended rights of that degraded people whom he ruled at the same time with the most absolute authority. He had not yet returned from Egypt when, at Rome, they had already decreed him every honor both human and divine. The title of Imperator was conferred on him for life. His colleague, Sextus Apuleius, along with the whole senate, took a solemn oath to obey the emperor's decrees; and it was determined that he should hold the consulate so long as he

esteemed it necessary for the interests of the people. Such was the contemptible servility of all ranks of the state, that temples were erected to his honor, and public worship and sacrifice performed at the altars of the "divine Augustus." He, however, with becoming modesty, requested that these honors might be paid to him in the provinces alone, as *at Rome* he should never regard himself but as a private citizen invested with the superintendence of the rights and liberties of the republic. The state being now in profound peace, the temple of Janus, which had remained open since the beginning of the second Punic war—a period of 188 years—was shut,—an event which occasioned the most universal joy. This single circumstance contributed much to abolish the memory of all those cruelties, proscriptions, and complicated horrors, which had accompanied the triumvirate and the civil wars; and the "infatuated Romans now believed themselves a free people, since they had no longer to fight for their liberty." *

It was the policy of Augustus to keep up this favorable delusion, by extraordinary marks of indulgence and munificence. He gratified the people by continually amusing them with their favorite games and spectacles; he affected an extreme regard for all the ancient popular customs; he pretended the utmost deference for the senate; he re-established the Comitia, which the internal commotions of the government had prevented from being regularly held; he flattered the people with the ancient right of electing their own magistrates; if *he* presented candidates, it was only to give a simple recommendation, under reservation that they should be judged worthy by the people, and the people, on their part, could not but regard as the most certain symptom of desert, the recommendation of so gracious a prince. It was in this manner that Augustus, by the retention of all those empty but ancient appendages of liberty, concealed the form of that arbitrary monarchy which he determined to maintain; and that he thus, with the most hypocritical and specious generosity, contrived, with the machinery of freedom, to accomplish all the purposes of despotism.

After having established an appearance of order in the several departments of the state, Augustus, to complete the farce, affected a wish to abdicate his authority, and return to the rank of a private citizen; but this was a piece of gross affectation. He consulted Mecænas, however, and Marcus Agrippa, whether he ought to follow his inclination. Mecænas, with the most honest, though certainly not the wisest policy, exhorted him to put his design in execution; but Agrippa, more of a courtier, and perhaps having more discernment into the real character of Augustus, or dreading

* Condillac.

the repetition of those cruel and turbulent scenes which had preceded his exaltation, assured him that the public happiness depended entirely on his continuing to hold the reins of government; and this advice was too consonant to the actual views of Augustus not to be readily embraced.

This seeming moderation, however, increased the popularity of Augustus, and even paved the way for an extension of his power. The consulship had, for many years, fallen into disuse. Under the pretence of effecting a reformation of various abuses in the several orders of the community, Augustus requested that he might be invested with consular powers; and having obtained this office, he introduced many improvements in the different departments of the government, which, although salutary in themselves, contributed much to the increase of his own authority. With this daily augmentation of power, he was not without continual alarms for his personal safety. He was naturally timid, and the fate of Cæsar was ever before him. For a considerable time, he never went to the senate-house without a suit of armor under his robe; he carried a dagger in his girdle; and was always surrounded by ten of the bravest of the senators, on whose attachment he could thoroughly depend. It was much to the credit of Augustus that he reposed an unlimited confidence in Mecenas—a most able minister, and one who, while the fairest ornament to his sovereign, appears to have always had at heart the interest and happiness of the people. It was by his excellent counsels that Augustus was taught to assume those virtues to which his nature was a stranger: it was to the patronage of Mecenas that literature and the fine arts owed much of their encouragement and consequent progress: it was by his instructions, by the counsels he inculcated, that the base and inhuman Octavius was transformed into the affable and humane Augustus.

In the seventh year of his consulate, Augustus again pretended a desire to abdicate, and he actually informed the senate that he had resigned all authority: but he was now secure of the consequences of this avowal. From those mercenary voices which had, no doubt, been behind the scenes, well trained to this hypocritical farce, there was now one universal cry of supplication, entreating him not to abandon that republic which he had preserved from destruction, and whose existence depended on his paternal care. "Since it must be so," said he, "I accept the empire for ten years, unless the public peace and tranquillity shall permit me before that time to seek that ease and retirement which I so passionately desire." He would not even consent to take the burden of the whole empire, but entreated that the senate and people should govern a part of the provinces. From the distribution which followed, we learn the extent of the Roman empire at this time. Augustus reserved for his own government Italy, the two Gauls, Spain, Germany, Syria, Phœnicia, Cyprus, and Egypt. To the senate and people were allotted *Africa Proper*, Numidia, Lybia, Bithy-

nia, Pontus, Greece, Illyria, Macedonia, Dalmatia, and the Islands of Crete, Sicily, and Sardinia. The provinces of which Augustus retained the government *direct* were those where *the legions* were principally stationed!

The title of Consul, which had been of assistance at first in disguising his power, was now judged unnecessary by Augustus; and the annual ceremony of the renewal of this dignity perhaps recalled too strongly to the minds of the people the irrevocable tenure by which he held it. He resigned it, therefore, in the eleventh year of his consulate; and, as a compensation for this exercise of moderation, the people entreated him to accept of the office of Perpetual Tribune. By this refined policy, every increase of power seemed, so far from any encroachment upon his part, to be forced upon him by the anxious entreaty of the people. In virtue of this last office, he became in all causes, civil as well as criminal, the supreme judge. Formerly in the republic there had never been recognised any right of appeal from any of the courts to the tribunes; but the people, who had always till now considered themselves as possessing the supereminent right of appeal, now voluntarily conferred it upon their perpetual tribune, as their chief magistrate and virtual representative.

Marcellus, the nephew of Augustus, to whom he had given his daughter in marriage, and whom he destined for his successor—a personage of great promise—died at this time, to the unspeakable regret of the Roman people, in the very flower of his youth. He had just completed his twentieth year, and in his talents and disposition had begun to show every indication of a great and a generous prince. He has been immortalized by Virgil in that exquisite eulogium, with which all are acquainted, in the sixth book of his Æneid.

Marcus Agrippa was the man who seemed to stand next to this amiable youth in the affection of the emperor. Agrippa had married the niece of Augustus; but on the death of Marcellus, he caused him to divorce her, and in return gave him his daughter, the widow of Marcellus, in marriage. This lady was the infamous Julia, who afterwards became so openly scandalous in her amours, that her father, after informing the senate of his reasons, condemned her to banishment.

Notwithstanding the absolute authority now possessed by Augustus, it was still the policy of this monarch to retain all the exterior forms of a republic. The elections of magistrates were punctually held in the Comitia. Consuls were, as usual, annually chosen; and the republic retained its ædiles, its tribunes, its quæstors, and prætors. In the government of Augustus, and in the gradual increase of his authority, the prince, to all appearance derives his power from the people. After a little, we shall observe the emperor affecting to conceal this truth; and in the sequel, it will be totally forgotten.

While Augustus had thus, step by step, arrived at the summit of power, his son-in-law Agrippa had entirely brought under subjection the Spanish peninsula, where, for nearly two centuries, the Romans had been compelled to a continual struggle. Augustus, to secure his own authority, by firmly attaching to himself so able a general, associated him with himself in the office of censor. The two censors immediately applied themselves with great vigor to the reformation of abuses. Augustus, perhaps not hypocritically, affected the highest regard to the purity of public morals, although in his own private life he is known to have been profligate and vicious.

The tenth year, the period which he had appointed for laying down his authority, had now arrived. He accordingly did so, and, at the earnest entreaty of the people, again resumed it; and so fond does he appear to have been of this solemn farce, that five times in the course of his government he amused the nation with this empty pageantry of their pretended power. The empire was now again threatened with war, and Augustus set out for Gaul, into which the Germans had begun now to make those irruptions, which proved afterwards so fatal to the provinces. Drusus, in the meantime, defeated the Rhætians, a people inhabiting part of the modern Switzerland: and Agrippa restored peace to Asia. In marking the successive steps of despotism, it is not unnecessary to mention that this general was the first who refused the honor of a triumph, which gave rise to this privilege belonging ever afterwards only to the emperors; and that he omitted also, for the first time, that customary form of acquainting the senate with the detail of his military operations, corresponding with Augustus alone. In these matters, of course, his example became henceforth the rule.

At this time died Marcus Agrippa, and his widow Julia now took her third husband, Tiberius, who became thus by a double tie the son-in-law of Augustus, for the emperor had likewise married his mother Livia. Augustus was then at war with the Pannonians, Dacians, and Dalmatians. Tiberius and his brother Drusus commanded the armies against those barbarous tribes with great success, but, to the deep regret of the Romans, their particular favorite Drusus died in Germany, leaving three children, Germanicus, Claudius (afterwards emperor,) and Julia, married to Caius Cæsar. Caius was the son of Agrippa by Julia, whom Augustus had adopted, along with his brother Lucius. These two princes died soon after, poisoned as it was supposed by Livia, the wife of Augustus, to make way for the succession of her son Tiberius. This dark and ambitious man now bent all his powers to gain the confidence of Augustus, who, upon his return from a successful campaign against the Germans, not only allowed him the honor of a triumph, but associated him with himself in the government of the empire. At the request of Augustus also, the people, accustomed

now to unlimited compliance, conferred upon Tiberius the government of the provinces and the supreme command of the armies.

On the ground of his advanced age, the emperor now found an opportunity of shaking off all that dependence upon the senate and people to which his policy had hitherto confined him. He no longer came regularly to the senate, but formed a sort of privy council, consisting of twenty senators, together with the consuls of the year, and the *consules designati*; and it was determined in the senate, that the resolutions of this assembly should have the same authority as the *senatus consulta*. Augustus did not long survive this his last and boldest innovation. He died soon after at Nola, in Campania, in the seventy-sixth year of his age, after having, in conjunction with Mark Antony, ruled the Roman republic for nearly twelve, and governed alone as emperor for forty-four years.

In treating of the Roman literature, we observed that high degree of advancement to which it attained under the reign of Augustus; and we may attribute no small part of that lustre which has been thrown upon his administration, to the splendid coloring bestowed on his character by the illustrious poets who adorned his court, and repaid his favors by their incense and adulation.

> "Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona
> Multi, sed omnes illacrymabiles
> Urgentur ignotique longa
> Nocte, carent quia vate sacro."

Augustus, by his testament, had named Tiberius his heir, together with his mother Livia, and substituted to them Drusus, the son of Tiberius, and Germanicus. Tiberius was no favorite with the body of the people. They knew him to be vicious and debauched, and of a severe and cruel disposition; yet to so low a pitch of degradation had they now fallen, that the very dread of these vices in his character operated so strongly on their servile minds as to secure his succession to the empire without a whisper of opposition. An embassy of the senators was deputed to offer him the reins of government while he was on his return from Illyria. He received them with much affected humility; talked of the burden of so extensive an empire and his own limited ability; pretended uncommon unwillingness to undertake so exalted an office; and, at length, after the usual ceremony of tears and supplication on the part of the senate, was at last prevailed to yield to their entreaties.

Notwithstanding these promising symptoms, this was all the mockery of moderation with which Tiberius ever condescended to flatter the prejudices of the senate or the people; for it soon after appeared that he esteemed the power enjoyed by his predecessor as far too little for his ambition. It was not sufficient for him that the substance of the republic was now gone for ever; the very appearance of it, and all those forms which recalled it to his

recollection, were judged necessary to be abolished. Augustus had received from the people the power of legislation, but he left them in return the right of electing their own magistrates, and all the privileges of the Comitia. Tiberius at once abolished all these formalities. The people were no longer assembled, yet the emperor did not choose to break entirely with the senate. He frequently affected to consult them, or at least to communicate to them his resolutions, and flattered them still with the possession of a shadow of authority.

The supremacy of the laws with regard to treason gave at last to Tiberius an opportunity of displaying his natural disposition. Sylla had abolished the actions of those guilty of treason. This law had fallen into disuse under Julius Cæsar, who treated such offences with their merited contempt. Augustus had revived the law; Tiberius, with his usual dissimulation, neither renewed it nor abrogated it. The prætor having asked if he should take cognizance of such offences, the emperor vouchsafed him no other answer than that he should observe the laws; an answer which sufficiently informed the people what they had to expect, whilst Tiberius persuaded himself that he thus avoided all imputation of adopting sanguinary measures.

Meantime his nephew, Germanicus, who was acquiring great glory by his military exploits in Germany, was recalled by Tiberius, who had become jealous of his popularity with the army. The emperor sent him to the oriental provinces on the pretence of quelling some insurrections, and a short time after he died—as was suspected of poison administered to him by command of Tiberius. Every vicious prince has his favorite, the minister of his pleasure, and the obsequious instrument of his criminal or tyrannical purposes. Ælius Sejanus was prefect of the prætorian bands, who were the emperor's guards—a body of men amounting then to ten thousand of the flower of the troops, but who, increasing in number and in political power, became at last the sovereign disposers of the empire. Sejanus, their prefect, acquired at length so complete an ascendency over the mind of Tiberius, that he overcame the natural reserve and suspicion of his temper, and became the confidant of his most secret thoughts. It was not to be wondered at that this minion should entertain the highest views of ambition. He conceived no less a design than to exterminate the whole family of the Cæsars, and his first step was the poisoning of Drusus, the son of Tiberius, which he contrived to execute so secretly that he escaped all suspicion both of the emperor and of the people. His next design was to remove Agrippina, the widow of Germanicus, with her two sons, Nero and the younger Drusus. Sejanus accordingly represented Agrippina to Tiberius as a woman of unlimited ambition, and who secretly fomented a party of malecontents in the state as assistants to her own aggrandizement and that of her sons. To this accusation, the natural pride and haugh-

tiness of the temper of Agrippina gave some shadow of color, and she and Nero, her eldest son, were condemned to banishment, whilst the younger Drusus, was confined to prison.

Every day now produced some new information, some pretended charge of treason brought by Sejanus and his infamous minions against the most eminent persons of the court: and the idea that these informations were pleasing to the dark and vindictive mind of the emperor, began to multiply them exceedingly. The constant executions for treason, by which Sejanus was daily clearing the way for the accomplishment of his own designs, produced at length such an effect on the gloomy temper of Tiberius, that he believed his life to be in continual danger. At the instigation of Sejanus, he quitted Rome and retired to the Isle of Capreæ, in the Bay of Naples, carrying with him a few of the senators, and some Greek literati, in whose conversation he professed to find entertainment. It is said that in this retreat the old tyrant gave himself up to excesses in debauchery which exceed all credibility. It is certain, however, that the severity of his former manner of life was very opposite to such licentiousness of character, and we may naturally presume that the hatred of his subjects, and the concealment which he probably chose from the consideration of personal safety, have given occasion to much aspersion, or at least to great exaggerations on the subject.

Sejanus, meanwhile, had acquired an absolute authority in Rome, and was sovereign in every thing but the name. It was but a small step, to a villain of his complexion, to aim likewise at that last acquisition. He formed, therefore, a design, to assassinate Tiberius;—but the conspiracy was discovered. Such, however, was the influence of Sejanus, that the emperor was obliged to use art and address to bring him to punishment. He at first loaded him with caresses, and caused him to be nominated to the consulate. He then took occasion privately to sound the minds of the people, and hinted some grounds of dissatisfaction with his conduct, which instantly he perceived to cool the zeal of his former flatterers and pretended friends. Convinced now of the ground on which he stood, and certain that this dreaded popularity of Sejanus was hollow, and the effect of power alone, whilst he was really detested by all ranks in the state, Tiberius deemed it time to throw off the mask. He sent, therefore, an officer to deprive him of the command of the prætorian guards; and accusing him at the same time of treason by a letter to the senate, Sejanus was instantly arrested, condemned to death by acclamation, torn to pieces, and thrown into the Tiber. Tiberius now became more negligent than ever of the cares of government, and confusion prevailed in every department of the state. The magistracies were unsupplied, the distant provinces were without governors, and the Roman name became contemptible. The only exertions of the imperial power were manifested in public executions, confiscations, and the most complicated scenes of cruelty and rapine. At length the empire was

delivered from this odious tyrant, who falling sick at Misenum, was strangled in his bed by Macro, the new prefect, who had succeeded Sejanus in the command of the prætorian cohorts. He was put to death in the 78th year of his age, and the 23rd of his reign.

One great event distinguished the reign of Tiberius. In the 18th year of that reign, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and the divine author of our religion, suffered death upon the cross, a sacrifice and propitiation for the sins of mankind. It is said that soon after his death, Pilate, the Jewish governor, wrote to Tiberius an account of his passion, resurrection, and miracles, upon which the emperor made a report of the whole to the senate, desiring that Jesus might be acknowledged a god by the Romans, but they, the senate, displeased that the proposal had not come from themselves, refused the emperor's request. This last circumstance utterly discredits the story, for the Roman senate dared not refuse the request of Tiberius. The progress of the Christian religion from its first institution till the utter extinction of Paganism in the Roman empire, will form the future subject of a connected chapter.

By his testament, the emperor had nominated as his successor Caligula, the son of Germanicus, and his grandson by adoption, together with Tiberius, the son of Drusus, and his grandson by blood. Caligula was, on his father's account, the favorite of the people, and more especially of the soldiers, amongst whom he had been educated; and the senate, to gratify the people, chose to set aside the nomination in favor of Tiberius, and to confer the sovereignty on Caligula alone. His accession to the empire, gave, therefore, universal satisfaction; and, for a time, he condescended to maintain this favorable opinion by a few acts of clemency and moderation. He removed the informers who swarmed through Rome, and had been the bane of the preceding reign. He restored for a while the privileges of the Comitia, and he gratified the people still more by their favorite exhibition of public games and shows. But this dawn of sunshine soon gave place to a day of gloom and horror. Caligula, weary of dissimulation, threw off the mask at once. Macro, the murderer of his predecessor, was too dangerous a man to continue long in that favor with Caligula in which this piece of service had placed him—he was accordingly murdered. The young Tiberius, although then no favorite of the people, might become so, when they discovered the real temper of the rival they had preferred to him. He was, therefore, speedily cut off. Caligula had abolished informations on account of treason, but he did so only to facilitate the rapidity of execution, and he now, therefore, required not the formality of an information. He put to death, without assigning even a pretence, whatever person he took a prejudice against. It is inconceivable to what excess this monster proceeded. His whole reign, with the exception of a few months at its commencement, was one

continued and complicated course of madness and cruelty. "Caligula," says Montesquieu, "was a true sophist in his cruelty: as he was the descendant of both Antony and Augustus, he was wont to say, that he would punish both those who celebrated the anniversary of the battle of Actium, and those who did not." Upon the death of his sister, Drusilla, he punished some for mourning for her, because they ought to have known she was a goddess; and put to death others for not mourning, because she was the sister of the emperor.

In addition to all this, Caligula loaded the provinces with the most excessive taxes; and such was his avarice, that every day some of the citizens fell a sacrifice in the confiscations of their property. It would only create disgust were we to enter into any detail of the complicated and ingenious cruelties and the absurd extravagances of a madman—of the multiplied instances of his folly as well as of his depravity—his ridiculous mock campaigns—the temples he erected in honor of himself, where, in the character of his own priest, he offered sacrifices to himself, sometimes as Jupiter, and sometimes as Juno. One day he chose to be Mercury, the next he was Bacchus or Hercules. At last, in the fourth year of his reign, this monster met with the fate which he deserved, and was assassinated by Cassius, a tribune of the prætorian guards, in the twenty-ninth year of his age.

The great body of the Roman people and of the senate would now have gladly preferred the restoration of the republic to the continuance of the empire; but the soldiers, who were all powerful, preferred a military government under an emperor, over whom they began now to discover that they could have unlimited command. At the time when Caligula was put to death, Claudius, his uncle, and the brother of Germanicus, a man whose weak and childish disposition had never cherished an ambitious thought, had concealed himself in a corner of the palace for fear of assassination. A soldier accidentally discovering his retreat, saluted him emperor. Whilst Claudius was tremblingly begging his life to be spared, some others coming up, they put him in a litter and carried him to the camp of the prætorian guards. There, as yet afraid, and uncertain of his fate, he promised to each of the soldiers a large gratification, and received in return their oaths of allegiance. The people approved the choice, and the senate was obliged to confirm it. Thus was the empire *bought for the first time*—a practice which we shall see become in future extremely common.

Claudius at the age of fifty was still a child: his countenance was that of an idiot, and his mind, naturally weak, had never received the smallest tincture of education. He was the son of Octavia, the sister of Augustus; but as he had never been adopted, he did not belong to the family which carried the names of Cæsar and of Augustus. He assumed, however, both; and they were henceforth considered as *titles* annexed to the imperial power—

the reigning emperor being always styled Augustus, and his appointed successor honored with the title of Cæsar.

Claudius knew that, to become popular, he ought to go counter to every measure of his predecessor. He began, therefore, by abolishing most of his laws. He passed an act of oblivion for all former offences against the state, and he appeared forward to extend his whole attention to the strict administration of justice and the establishment of good order. He even began to show symptoms of an enterprising disposition, which was quite opposite to all ideas which had been formed of his character from the tenor of his past life; and he undertook to reduce Britain under subjection to the Roman arms, which, in the opinion of Tacitus, Julius Cæsar had rather pointed out than conquered. He accordingly sent thither Plautius, one of his generals, and encouraged by his success, was induced afterwards to go thither in person. But this was entirely an expedition of show and parade. He remained but sixteen days in the island, leaving his lieutenants Plautius and Vespasian to prosecute the war, which continued with various success for many years. The Silures or inhabitants of South Wales, under their king Caradoc or Caractacus, made a most powerful and obstinate resistance. This warlike prince, with great address and military skill, contrived to remove the seat of war into the most inaccessible parts of the country, and for nine years the Romans saw no prospect of reducing this courageous people to subjection. At length, in one unfortunate engagement, the Britons were entirely defeated: the wife and daughter of Caractacus were taken prisoners; and this brave man was afterwards treacherously delivered to the Romans by Cartismandua, queen of the Brigantes, in whom territories he had sought refuge. He was soon after conducted to Rome, where he displayed that noble spirit which attracted from all who beheld him, at once their respect and admiration. In passing through the streets of that sumptuous capital, and observing the splendor of all the objects around him, "Alas!" exclaimed he, "is it possible that they who possess such magnificence at home should envy Caractacus his poor cottage in Britain?" He appeared undismayed before the tribunal of the emperor, and although he disdained here to sue for pardon or for mercy, yet he was willing for the good of his people to accept of it; and Claudius, it must be acknowledged, treated him with a generous humanity.

The commencement of this reign promised extremely well; but what possible dependence could there be on a man so weak as to be guided by the lowest officers of his court. The servants and the freedmen of Claudius had such an ascendency over him, that they obtained from him offices of the utmost importance in the empire. The meanest of his domestics were appointed judges in the different tribunals, and governors of the provinces. These dishonorable and avaricious wretches reduced peculation to

a system, and filled every corner of the empire with loud complaints of their rapine and extortion. Messalina, also, the vicious and abandoned wife of Claudius, urged him on to various acts of injustice and cruelty. This woman was infamous for all manner of vices. Her debaucheries, which were quite notorious in Rome, exceed all belief; but, what is the most surprising part of her character, she had the address to pass with Claudius, as a paragon of virtue. She at length, however, proceeded to that height of effrontery, that during a short absence of Claudius she publicly married Caius Silius, and upon the emperor's return, made him, by way of jest, to sign the marriage contract. Narcissus, his freedman, soon made him sensible that the matter was too serious, by informing him that the people no longer looked upon him as emperor: utterly unable to act for himself, he now entreated that Narcissus would take any steps he judged best for his interest; and his favorite, thus invested with authority, immediately secured the prætorian guards, and caused Messalina and Silius her gallant to be put to death. Claudius now, by the advice of his faithful counsellors, his freedmen, married his niece Agrippina, the daughter of Germanicus, a woman equally vicious as Messalina, and more daring in her crimes. Her favorite object was to secure the empire for her son Domitius Enobarbus; and, to gain the freedmen to her interest, she made no scruple to prostitute herself to them. In the prosecution of her scheme she employed banishment, poison, murder—every different engine of vice and inhumanity. She obliged Octavia, the emperor's daughter, to marry Domitius, whom she now made Claudius adopt, to the prejudice of his son Britannicus; and Domitius was hailed Cæsar, with the titles of *Nero Claudius Cæsar Drusus Germanicus*. She gave him for his preceptor Seneca, the Stoic philosopher, from whose instructions he reaped no other benefit than an ostentatious display of taste and erudition, without possessing any tincture of either. Agrippina, having by these complicated crimes paved the way for the succession of her son to the throne, now thought proper to make way for him by poisoning her husband; and Claudius, after a reign of fourteen years, was thus carried off at the age of sixty-three.

The succession of Nero was immediate. The captain of the prætorian guards presented him to the soldiers: he promised them a considerable donative, and in return was proclaimed emperor—the senate, with their usual passive compliance, confirming the choice. Nero began, like some of his predecessors, upon a good plan, but unfortunately it was not his own. His preceptor, the celebrated Seneca, had acquired such influence over him, that the first few years of his reign promised a revival of the times of Augustus; but his natural disposition could no longer be restrained. With Seneca, who prompted his decrees and kept him within the bounds of moderation, he appeared in public a wise and

amiable prince, yet at this very time it was his favorite amusement to range through the streets of Rome with a band of young debauchees, who indulged themselves in every species of outrage and disorder. His natural disposition first publicly showed itself in an insolent neglect of all the cares of government; and his mother, Agrippina, took advantage of this disposition by ruling every thing as she chose. Seneca warned his pupil of the danger of allowing free course to the views of this ambitious and unprincipled woman, and his first step was to dismiss from the court her chief favorites and confidants. The vindictive Agrippina prompted her to seek an outrageous revenge. She proposed to bring Britannicus to the prætorian bands, and to acknowledge before them the crimes she had committed to place Nero on the throne. The emperor prevented the execution of this purpose by poisoning Britannicus, while he sat at supper with himself; but he sought against his mother a more refined vengeance. She was invited to Baiæ, to celebrate the feast of Bacchus. The ship in which she sailed was constructed in such a manner as to burst and fall to pieces at sea; but the machinery failed, and Agrippina came safe ashore. Nero, enraged at the disappointment of his stratagem, ordered one of his freedmen to assassinate her.

As he was now rid of those anxieties which arose from his dread of the designs of Agrippina, and had nothing material to occupy his mind, (for he disdained the proper cares of empire,) he gave a loose to the meanest and most vicious passions. He prompted the young nobility to exhibit themselves as actors upon the stage; he forced the Roman knights to fight, like gladiators, in the arena; and in these disgraceful amusements he bore himself a principal part. Burrhus, the captain of the prætorian guards, a man of talents and of virtue—although at times, he had appeared to show too much compliance with the will of his master—was not, in the opinion of Nero, sufficiently obsequious, and was therefore removed by poison. Upon his death, Seneca, who lost a powerful friend, retired from the court. Nero had no longer any around him but the profligate and abandoned like himself. Poppæa, a woman of great beauty, but abandoned morals, had been seduced from her husband by Otho, who in his turn prostituted her to the emperor, to serve his own purposes of ambition. She soon gained such an ascendency over Nero, that he was induced to divorce his wife Octavia to make way for her to the throne; and such was, at this time, the infamous servility of the Roman senate, that a panegyric was pronounced in praise of the emperor, and a deputation sent to congratulate him on this auspicious event.

A conspiracy, which was at this time discovered, gave Nero ample scope for the gratification of the natural cruelty of his disposition. The slightest suspicion of guilt was now punished with immediate death. It was a sufficient crime if a man was seen to have saluted a suspected person. Seneca, amongst others, was

accused of having been privy to this conspiracy; and as a mark of the emperor's gratitude for the past services of his preceptor, he was permitted to choose the manner of his death. He chose to expire in a warm bath, after having his veins opened.

Nero, intoxicated with his own accomplishments as a gladiator and combatant in the arena, was not content with the applause of Rome: he determined now to shew himself in Greece, where he contended for, and consequently gained, the prize at the Olympic and Pythian games. On his return to the Capitol he celebrated a splendid triumph, where he commanded himself to be hailed by the titles of Hercules and Apollo.

It becomes painful to enumerate a long series of extravagant instances of every variety of vice, and multiplied examples of the most complicated and capricious cruelty. The tyranny of this monster at length found an end. Vindex, an illustrious Gaul, by his interest with his countrymen as proprietor, excited them to a general revolt. He offered the empire to Galba, then governor of Spain, who took upon himself the title of Lieutenant of the Senate and People of Rome. The provinces declared in his favor. Rome was divided, and at length the party of Vindex prevailed. Nero, abandoned by his guards, was obliged to conceal himself in the house of one of his freedmen. The senate proclaimed him an enemy to his country, and condemned him to die *more majorum*; that is, to be scourged, thrown from the Tarpeian rock, and then flung into the Tiber. Unable to bear the thoughts of such a death, Nero tried the points of two daggers, but wanted courage to die by his own hand. He entreated the aid of one of his slaves, who was not slow in the performance of that friendly office, and was in this manner put to death, after a reign of fourteen years, in the thirtieth year of his age; a character happily difficult to be paralleled in the annals of human nature.

In the time of the civil wars, the generals of the republic were certain of the obedience of their troops. They were devoted to their chiefs, and although expecting a recompense, they never dared to claim it as their due. Things had now entirely changed. A long state of servitude had annihilated every generous sentiment. Even the names of the ancient Roman families were lost. The soldiers now saw nothing in Rome but a despicable senate, a servile populace, and immense riches—of which last they soon found that they were the supreme disposers. The prætorian guards had now every thing at their command. Galba was of an ancient and illustrious family. He had conducted himself honorably in the government of several of the provinces, but old age had unfortunately turned to avarice a disposition naturally economical, and his manners, rigid from his life and constitution, were now become severe and cruel. He was seventy-three years of age when he was proclaimed emperor. He had scarcely arrived in Italy, when his conduct entirely alienated the affections of the

army to whom he owed his elevation. He disappointed them of the reward they expected, telling them that an emperor should choose his soldiers, and not purchase them. The people too, who, in the time of Nero, had been constantly amused with games and public shows, could not easily brook the loss of their favorite spectacles. In other instances the new emperor scrupled not to add injustice to his imprudence. Without the form of a trial, he stripped many of the richest citizens of their fortunes, on pretence of their having been improperly acquired under Nero.

The army in Germany were the first to evince a spirit of disaffection and mutiny, and openly expressed their desire of electing another emperor. Galba began to feel his own weakness, and to be sensible that his favorite passion had impelled him into a wrong course. He wished to find a support in the abilities and talents of the young Piso, who was distinguished both by his illustrious birth and by his eminent virtues. He adopted him, therefore, as his son, and destined him to be his successor in the empire; but, unfortunately for the public welfare, this measure came too late. Otho, the husband of Poppæa, and the rival of Piso, was of a character as doubtfully infamous as the other was truly respectable. He was jealous of the destined honors of Piso, and determined to risk every thing to destroy him. He was immersed in debt, and had no means of escaping ruin but by some desperate attempt. It was to him a matter of indifference, he used to declare, how he died—whether by the sword of the enemy or the hand of the executioner. With this genius, and in such a disposition of mind, it was not surprising that he should harbor schemes of the highest and most daring import. He flattered his partisans by telling them that certain wise astrologers had given him a promise of the empire; and, as the surest engine of policy, he was lavish of his promises to the soldiers. He prevailed upon some of the boldest of the guards to take the active part in accomplishing his designs. On a day appointed, they carried him to the prætorian camp, where he was proclaimed emperor. Galba and Piso were both murdered in attempting to quell the tumult, and their heads were presented to Otho, who, it is said, gave early demonstrations of his sanguinary disposition by the exultation with which he received them. Galba had only reigned for the short space of seven months.

Otho, although he had found it an easy matter to induce the senate to confirm the election of the soldiers, was not without a competitor for the empire. Before the murder of Galba, Vitellius, who commanded in Germany, had been proclaimed emperor by his troops. He had arrived at authority by the same means as Otho, with a character, if possible, yet more deeply infamous. He, possessed himself, no military talents; but this want was supplied by the abilities of his generals, Cæcina and Valens. The art of war, during the long peace which had continued, with little

intermission, since the accession of Augustus, was now, in some measure, lost in Italy. The prætorian guards were lazy, licentious, ignorant of their duty, and completely debauched by the successive donatives of the emperors. It was no wonder that the apprehension of a civil war should have struck terror into the breasts of all who deserved the name of Roman citizens. They had no heroes to look to for their commanders—no troops animated, as formerly, by the love of glory and of their country. There existed, however, many degraded and desperate men, who were pleased with this prospect, in the hopes of profiting by the public ruin: whilst those cowardly minds, which composed the bulk of the citizens, were depressed with fear, or sunk in indifference and despondency.

Vitellius was at first unsuccessful in his pretensions to the empire. Caecina and Valens did not act in concert; and Otho, had he possessed one spark of Roman spirit, would have found it easy to crush his rival in the beginning. He was resolved, at length, to hazard a decisive battle, but he had not courage to head the troops in person. His army was defeated at Bedriacum, between Mantua and Cremona, where above forty thousand men fell on each side. Otho might still have retrieved matters. Since his accession he had ingratiated himself with the soldiers, who earnestly urged him to continue the war. He had even gained, by an appearance of moderation, some affection from the people; and with these supports he might yet, by one vigorous effort, have foiled his ambitious rival. But despair had taken possession of him: his resolution was fixed, and no persuasion could alter it. For this resolution he assigned those generous motives of preventing the effusion of blood, and preserving the lives of his subjects; for which, unfortunately, the tenor of his former life will hardly permit us to give him credit. It must be owned, however, that his death was heroical. He gave his last orders with the utmost composure, provided as well as he could for the safety of his friends, whom he entreated to make a timely submission to the conqueror; like Cato, went to rest, slept with tranquillity, and, on awakening, fell upon his own sword. He had reigned for three months with considerable moderation, but the known vices of his character gave too much reason to believe that this short period of good administration would have been like the deceitful prelude of Nero.

Rome was now in the hands of a brutal tyrant, who affected no disguise to conceal his natural disposition. Vitellius was abandoned to every species of vicious debauchery. It is sufficient to paint his character to say, that he expressed a most devoted regard for the memory of *Nero*. Fortunately, this reign was not of long continuance.

Vespasian, a man of obscure family, but possessed of strong native talents, had raised himself by servile offices under Caligula

and Claudius, and had at length arrived at the consulship. Under Nero he had obtained the command of the army in the war against the Jews, and had conducted it with equal courage and ability. The legions he commanded in the East taking offence, very naturally, when they perceived their fellow-soldiers deposing the emperor at pleasure, and enjoying, in case all the fruits of this exercise of power, thought it time for themselves, in their turn, to choose an emperor. Vespasian was persuaded by Mucianus, the governor of Syria, to offer himself a candidate, on the usual terms of a large donative. The soldiers proclaimed him, and he was immediately acknowledged over all the East. A great part of Italy submitted to his generals: and Vitellius, within a few months of his succession, saw himself reduced to the alternative of resigning the empire, or of dying like his predecessor. He chose the former, and immediately concluded a shameful treaty with Sabinus, the brother of Vespasian, then prefect of Rome, by which he saved his life; obtaining, in return for his resignation of the empire, the liberty of retiring to Campania, with a considerable yearly pension. This treaty the dastardly emperor read himself to the people, crying all the while like a child. He then submissively prepared to strip himself of all the ensigns of authority. The spirit of the citizens was roused at this self-degradation. They compelled him to return to his palace, and attacked the party of Sabinus, who retired to the Capitol. They burnt down the temple of Jupiter, seized Sabinus, and put him to death at the feet of Vitellius. In the meanwhile Primus, one of the generals of Vespasian, arriving with his army at the very time when the whole city was employed in the celebration of the Saturnalia, took immediate possession, without any opposition. Neither the consideration of glory nor of safety were sufficient to call off the minds of this miserable and degraded people from their favorite amusements. Vitellius was found concealed in the chamber of a slave. He was brought into the forum with a rope about his neck, loaded with reproaches, and ignominiously put to death, in the eighth month of his reign.

Vespasian was among those few princes whose character has changed for the better on their arrival at empire. Augustus, from a vicious and cruel man, became, if not a virtuous, in many respects an admirable prince. Vespasian had ingratiated himself by the most servile flattery with Caligula and Claudius, and raised himself by degrees from the meanest station to rank and distinction. His character, before he came to the empire, was at the best an equivocal one: but no sooner did he mount the throne, than all these suspicions were at once shown to be unfounded. He gave a general pardon to all who had been found in arms against him. He allowed every citizen, provided he spoke only of his own grievances, to have free access to his person, but declared war against that vile race of pensioned informers, which

had multiplied so exceedingly during the preceding reigns. His manners were simple, but his administration evinced both vigor and discernment. It was his custom every summer, when he could procure a respite from the busy scenes of the state, to retire to a small country house he had at Reti, where his mother lived, where he had been himself born, and which he took a pleasure to preserve in the same humble appearance in which he had known it in the days of his infancy. Under this reign, the senate, had any ancient virtue remained in that body or in Rome, might have recovered its former lustre. Vespasian communicated all affairs to that body. He also, in conjunction with his son Titus, applied himself to complete the number of the senators, as well as that of the Roman knights, which body had been diminished, and almost exterminated, by the tyranny of his predecessors.

The avarice of Vespasian is the only vice which sullies his imperial character. He renewed many of the most odious of the taxes of Galba, and added some others equally grievous; and yet the low state of the public funds, and the laudable purposes to which he uniformly applied the public money, may perhaps form some apology for this single vice. Under this reign was terminated the war with the Jews. They had been brought under the Roman yoke by Pompey, who had taken Jerusalem; under Augustus they were for some time governed by Herod as viceroy, but the tyranny of his son Archelaus provoked Augustus to banish him, and to reduce Judæa into the ordinary state of a Roman province. The stubborn character of that people was ill fitted for obedience to governors whose religion they held in abhorrence. They were continually rebelling on the slightest occasion. Nero had sent Vespasian to reduce them into order, and he had completed the subjugation of the whole country except the capital, when he was summoned to the cares of empire. He left the charge of the war to his son Titus, who concluded it by the taking of Jerusalem. That ill-fated city, whose ruin,—doomed by the Almighty, and predicted by prophets,—was accomplished rather by the intemperate zeal and inflexible obstinacy of its inhabitants than by the arms of its enemies, was carried by storm, after every means had been in vain tried by the humane Titus to persuade the Jews to surrender. The temple was burnt to ashes, and the city buried in ruins.

Vespasian now shut the temple of Janus, and associated his son Titus with himself in power. He conferred upon him the command of the prætorian guards, and employed him as his counsellor and first minister. At the age of sixty-nine he began to feel the approaches of his decay, and falling sick, retired to his little country-seat at Reti, where, although sensible that his death was near, he continued still to occupy himself uninterruptedly with the cares of government. An emperor, he said, ought to die standing, and thus in truth died Vespasian, after a prosperous and able reign of nine years and eleven months.

His son Titus had early evinced the most favorable dispositions. The abilities of his mind were equal to his personal accomplishments, and the qualities of his heart were inferior to neither. He seemed born to form the happiness of his people. He possessed heroism sufficient to have revived the ancient splendor of the Romans, and that tempered with a humanity and moderation which are but too rarely its attendants. Such was certainly his genuine character: for those who mention a few follies of his youth, as the indications of a vicious disposition, should remember what were the manners of the courts of Claudius and Nero in which he received his education. The intemperate follies of youth were soon abandoned for the care of his people, whose happiness became, from the moment of accession, his only study. He removed from all employments such as were of a dubious or dishonorable character. He continued in office every man of virtue whom his father had employed. Yet, with the strictness of moral feeling where it might conduce to the welfare of his people, his temper was far from being rigid. He knew the taste of the nation for their favorite amusements, and the amphitheatre which he built was of magnificence suitable to the grandeur of the empire.

In the first year of the reign of Titus, happened that most remarkable eruption of Mount Vesuvius which overwhelmed the cities of Herculaneum and Pompeii, and in which the elder Pliny lost his life, from an earnest curiosity to be a near witness of that striking spectacle. He had determined to embellish his Natural History with a description of that most interesting phenomenon, and for this purpose rushed eagerly into that situation of danger from which others were as eagerly attempting to escape. He was there suffocated by a cloud of sulphureous vapor. His nephew, the younger Pliny, has given a vivid description of this remarkable scene, in a letter to Tacitus the historian. (lib. vi. epist. 16.) Of the character of his uncle, he says, with justice, "Equidem beatos puto quibus deorum munere datum est aut facere scribenda, aut scribere legenda. Beatissimos vero quibus utrumque; horum in numero avunculus meus." * The desolation of Campania, occasioned by this terrible eruption of Vesuvius, was remedied to the utmost by the beneficence of Titus, who set apart large funds for the relief of the sufferers. In order to judge of their losses, he went himself to Campania, and by a kind of fatality, whilst absent on this benevolent expedition, a fire, which broke out in the city, desolated a great part of Rome. The losses occasioned to his subjects, by these reiterated calamities, he repaired at his own charges, not from the public money, which is generally the treasury

* "I esteem those the truly happy of mankind to whom the gods have allotted either to do things worthy of being written, or to write things worthy of being read. The happiest are they who have done both; and among those was my relative."

of the prince's bounties, but from the sale of the superfluous ornaments and riches of his palaces. Thus this virtuous prince occupied himself by every means which generosity or benevolence could dictate in diffusing happiness amongst all classes of his subjects, who, to their unspeakable regret, he was cut off in the third year of his reign. He died at the age of forty, leaving behind him that most merited and exalted epithet, *Deliciæ humani generis*;—*the delight of the human race.*

Titus was suspected to have been poisoned by his brother Domitian, a character in every respect the reverse of his. The monster,—for such his life declared him,—contrived, like some of his unworthy predecessors, for a while to conceal his vices. He affected to show a moderation and a love of justice, which gave promise of a happy reign; but his natural disposition soon unveiled itself. An insurrection, which happened at that time in Germany, gave him an opportunity of satiating himself with blood. The rebellion itself was speedily quelled, but its consequences were long deplored in the innumerable murders of the most respected among the citizens, for which the bare suspicion of having been concerned in the rebellion afforded always a sufficient pretext.

Informers, that despicable brood, the scourge of men of worth, began again to swarm throughout the country; slaves were bribed to give evidence against their masters; pretenders to astrology were appointed to draw the horoscopes of the principal citizens, the emperor ordering these to be put to death to whom fortune promised any thing great or successful.

Could the people have slept in quiet under the constant dread of a sentence of death, they might have been abundantly gratified in their darling amusements of games and shows. In these the new emperor squandered prodigious sums; but the expenses were in truth furnished by the unhappy citizens, whom he loaded with the most exorbitant taxes. It was the lot of Domitian, as of other tyrants, to be haunted by the continual dread of assassination. Fortunately for the world, his fears were at last realized; a conspiracy was formed in the heart of his palace, the empress, as is said, conducting the plot, and he was assassinated after a cruel and inglorious reign of fifteen years. Under this reign flourished Martial the epigramist, from whose venal praises if we were to judge of the character of Domitian, we should believe him one of the best and greatest princes.

In the time of Domitian the empire was engaged in a variety of wars; the only one of these which ended honorably for the Romans was that carried on in Britain. A detail of its operations belongs more properly to the sketch which we shall have to give of the earliest periods of the history of our own country. The conspirators who had put to death Domitian raised Cocceius Nerva to the throne. He was born at Narni, in Umbria, of a Cretan family, and was the first emperor who was not a Roman. He

was, when elected, approaching to the age of seventy—a man, certainly, of worth and virtue, but too weak for the burden of government. His prime disposition permitted all excesses. Under Domitian every thing was construed into a crime; under the reign of Nerva nothing. The troops who were fond of Domitian's memory, because he had been lavish of his donatives, demanded that his murderers should be punished. Nerva had not the resolution to refuse, and they put to death, under his eyes, those very persons who had given him the empire. Conscious of his own weakness, he, in order to secure himself upon the throne, adopted the virtuous Trajan, who was then carrying on war in Pannonia, and had never entertained any views of such exaltation. The empire was governed for some months by Trajan, till the death of Nerva, which happened soon after. He had reigned only sixteen months.

Trajan was in every respect worthy of the throne, for he possessed all those peculiar talents and those higher virtues which ought to adorn a sovereign. He was born of a respectable though not an ancient family:—his father had been consul. He perfectly understood the art of war, and he soon re-established, upon his succeeding to the empire, the ancient military discipline, which, of late, had been nearly forgotten. He marched always on foot, at the head of his troops; underwent every fatigue in common with them; and shared the same simple fare. Under such a general, it is no wonder the Roman arms should have regained their ancient splendor. His first war was against the Dacians, to whom Domitian had pusillanimously subjected the empire to pay an annual tribute. Trajan shook off this shameful imposition, and in a few campaigns entirely subdued that warlike nation. A lasting monument of his victories in the Dacian war still remains in that magnificent column at Rome which bears the name of Trajan, and which is decorated with his exploits in beautiful sculpture.

Chosroes, king of the Parthians, had disposed of the crown of Armenia. Trajan, considering this as an invasion of the rights of the Roman empire, marched against him, subdued his whole territories, took his capital of Ctesiphon, and brought under submission Mesopotamia, Syria, and Arabia Felix. This love of conquest he, however, carried too far; and it was the more blamable in a prince who had every requisite for rendering his people happy under the blessings of peace. It is said that he regretted he was not so young as Alexander, that he might have vied with him in the extent of his conquests. He should have rather remembered, that the empire was already too large, and felt the difficulty of defending its extensive frontier. Yet, influenced as he was by this ruling passion, his attention to the cares of government, and his management of all matters connected with the state, were truly admirable. It was customary for the emperor to be named consul the year following his accession. Trajan refused it, as he was

then at a distance in the provinces. On his return, he went through all the forms of the ancient procedure for the election of magistrates, with the utmost scrupulousness. These had long been discontinued by his predecessors. He called the comitia, presented himself as a candidate, and at his election, besides the customary oaths, he invoked the powers of heaven to strengthen him in the performance of his duty.

He was liberal in his donations to the people, but they were not, like those of other emperors, the mean bribes of a despot; they were the largesses of a beneficent prince, for the support of the wretched and indigent. The children of the poor were educated at his expense, and it was computed that two millions of destitute persons were maintained from his private purse. These charges were supplied by a well-ordered economy in his own fortune, and a regular administration of the public finances. He lived himself always with ancient simplicity, and he enriched the state by a careful attention to the minutest articles of public expenditure. Under this excellent mode of government every thing enjoyed its due consideration. The literary ornaments of the court of Trajan were Pliny the younger, the poet Juvenal, and those excellent writers, Tacitus and Plutarch. Their talents and genius were encouraged and liberally rewarded, whilst the fine arts also were assiduously cultivated, and flourished under that generous spirit of independence which prevailed throughout every branch of the state. Trajan himself, amidst the duties of sovereignty, enjoyed the greatest happiness which could belong to a private station. He walked through the streets of Rome, without guard or attendant, as a private individual, more secure in the love and affection of his subjects, than in the strength of an imperial retinue. He lived with his friends on terms of the most familiar intercourse; he shared in all their amusements; and there was between them an interchange of every kind and affectionate duty. Such was the virtuous and venerable Trajan, whose character so justly merited the surname universally given him, *Trajanus Optimus*. He died at the age of sixty-three, after a reign of nineteen years, a period during which Rome may be said to have been truly happy.

Elius Adrianus, on the pretence of having been adopted by Trajan in his last moments, took advantage of his command of the army then at Antioch, and prevailed with them to proclaim him emperor. Trajan had been his tutor, and had given him his grandniece in marriage. These circumstances gave a colorable title to his pretence of adoption, and the senate, therefore, did not think proper to dispute his right. It was the first measure of his reign to abandon all the conquests of Trajan. He restored to the Parthians the election of an independent sovereign; established Chosroes in his dominions; withdrew the Roman garrisons from the provinces of Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Assyria; and, in compliance with the precept of Augustus, once more confined the

Eastern empire within the bounds of the Euphrates. For this conduct various motives have been assigned. It has been ascribed to envy of the glory of his predecessor; but Gibbon justly observes, that he could scarcely place the superiority of Trajan in a more conspicuous light, than by thus confessing himself unequal even to retain what the former had subdued. Indolence, and an aversion to war, have been brought forward as his motives, but Adrian was, in fact, an excellent soldier, equally fearless of danger or of fatigue. It is certainly more natural and reasonable to ascribe to policy and prudence, a measure which eventually was conducive to the happiness and security of the state. The Parthians, he well knew, could not, from the natural strength of their country, be long kept under the yoke. Adrian foresaw in Parthia the future cradle of numerous and destructive wars, and he preferred the peace and security of the empire to this destructive prospect.

On his return to Rome, his conduct was such as to ingratiate him with every rank of the citizens. He remitted all the debts due to the treasury for the last sixteen years, by burning the records and obligations. He bestowed liberal presents upon those amongst the ancient families who had fallen into indigence, and appointed new funds for the maintenance and education of the children of the poor. He then undertook a progress through all the provinces of the empire, repressing abuses, and studiously relieving the people wherever he found the taxes too heavy or exorbitant. He rebuilt many cities which had been destroyed or had fallen into ruin. Amongst the rest he rebuilt Jerusalem, which he named *Ælia Capitolina*. In these progresses through his dominions, so careful was he in avoiding every thing which might distress the provinces, that he used no equipage or show, but travelled on foot, and lived with the frugality of a common soldier. This exemplary conduct made him beloved and respected by his subjects, as much as he was formidable to the enemies of the empire from his courage and resolution. His popularity became so great, that he stood not in need of the ensigns of power and authority. The guards, and the fasces, he deemed superfluous to him who made it his study to reign, not over the persons, but over the hearts of his subjects. Although, certainly, a few instances of severity had clouded the commencement of his reign, yet these were dictated by necessity whilst his authority was insecure. No sooner was he firmly seated on the throne, than his clemency and bounty were extended to all ranks of his subjects. To the talents of an experienced captain and a skilful politician, Adrian joined an excellent taste in the liberal arts, and a strong disposition towards the advancement of science and political literature. He was an admirer of poetry, music, and painting, and was himself a proficient in those arts. He seemed endowed with a universal genius, not only being eminent for those nobler qualities which constitute the

higher virtues of an emperor, but for those inferior, but not less attractive, graces which accompany an accomplished and cultivated mind. Envy has certainly stained the memory of this great prince with some immoralities; but, as for the truth of these there appears no foundation, it is becoming in the historian rather to bury them in oblivion, than to transmit even the suspicion of them to posterity. On the whole, the reign of Adrian was to the Roman people a period of unusual splendor, attended with what it seldom brings along with it,—uncommon public happiness.

In the twenty-second and last year of his reign, he adopted and declared for his successor Titus Aurelius Antoninus, a man of exemplary character and exalted merit. But not satisfied with this immediate instance of regard for posterity, he declared Aurelius his successor, on condition that he should, in his turn, adopt Annius Verus, a young man every way worthy of the throne, and to whom it should descend on his decease. These two were the Antonines, who for forty years governed the Roman empire with consummate wisdom, ability, and rectitude. Soon after having made this valuable bequest to his country, Adrian fell into a lingering and mortal disease. It was under the pressure of this disease, and in full conviction of his approaching dissolution, that he wrote those beautiful and well-known lines addressed to his soul, which bear so strongly the mark of a tranquil and philosophic mind convinced of its immortality, but anxious for its unknown destination.

Animula vagula, blandula,
Hospes, comesque corporis,
Quæ nunc abibis in loca;
Pallidula, frigida, nudula—
Nec ut soles dabis joca? *

We have now arrived at the age of the Antonines, the short remaining period of the union and prosperity of the Roman Empire.

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* Pope's translation of these lines is in everybody's hands.

## CHAPTER II.

Age of the Antonines—Commodus—Pertinax—The Prætorian Guards sell the Empire by auction—Four Emperors proclaimed—Severus marches to Rome and disbands the Prætorian Guards—War in Britain—Severus dies at York—Caracalla—Disorders in the Empire continue till the Reign of Diocletian—Constantine—His zeal for Christianity.

The reign of Antoninus Pius offers but few remarkable events to the pen of the historian, as, indeed, generally do such reigns as are the most happy. His character was that of the true philosopher, and the father of his people. He was likewise an excellent politician, and his attention to the cares of the state was indefatigable. Amongst others of his wise regulations may be reckoned that law which prohibited any person, once acquitted, to be tried again for the same crime. Generous to others, and himself perfectly disinterested, he bestowed his whole private fortune in repairing the losses and alleviating the calamities of the wretched. As he was secure of his authority, which was firmly seated in the affections of his people, he had no mean jealousy of the power of his ministers and magistrates; he raised the dignity and character of the senate, by regulating his own conduct according to its directions in the administration of all public affairs. The love and esteem of his subjects were only equalled by the respect entertained for his character by foreign nations. He was made the umpire of the differences of contending states, and received the voluntary homage of princes over whom he had no other authority than what the admiration of his wisdom and eminent virtues bestowed. This excellent prince, the idol of his subjects, died in the seventy-fourth year of his age, after a happy and prosperous reign of twenty-two years. He had, in the beginning of his reign, given his daughter Faustina, together with the title of Cæsar, to his successor, who had been pointed out by Adrian, Annius Verus, a man in every respect worthy to fill his place.

Annius was of an ancient and honorable family. On his accession to the empire, he changed this name for that of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, and he bestowed that of Verus upon Lucius Commodus, his brother by adoption. The Stoical philosophy was, at this time, in Rome, the most prevalent of all the sects. It gained credit with men of worth and probity from its opposition to the licentious manners of the times. Marcus Aurelius was by

nature attached to this philosophy, still more than by education. His morals were pure, his manners simple, and his virtues the result of his natural disposition. His *Meditations*, which are still extant, and which were composed amidst the tumult of a military life, abound with the most exalted and beautiful sentiments of piety and morality.

Antoninus had preferred M. Aurelius to Lucius Verus, with whose vicious disposition he was well acquainted. Yet the generosity of Marcus made him hasten to admit this unworthy brother to a share in the empire—an action which can admit of no justification. Rome had now, in fact, two emperors; and those who loved their country prayed as earnestly for the life of Marcus Aurelius as they did that Verus might not survive him. The Parthians, judging the death of Antoninus Pius a favorable opportunity to attack the empire, entered Armenia, and there cut to pieces the Roman army. They proceeded thence to ravage Syria, and an inroad was made at the same time by the Catti into Germany. Marcus Aurelius sent L. Verus against the Parthians, but that debauched and abandoned youth trusted to his generals the whole conduct of the expedition, whilst he himself spent his time between Antioch and Laodicea in the lowest excesses. His generals, however, were victorious, and he, proud of the laurels he had not won, returned at the head of his troops into Italy, where he carried with him a most dreadful pestilence which almost depopulated that country, and continued to rage for many years from province to province through the whole empire.

During this calamity many of the German nations took up arms—the Vandals, Dacians, Quadi, Suevi, and Alemanni. They laid waste Pannonia, and thence penetrated into Greece, where they ravaged even the Peloponnesus. In this concurrence of misfortunes, the public finances were exhausted to afford the requisite succors; and Aurelius, instead of the usual resource of increasing the taxes, adopted the generous expedient of divesting himself of his whole fortune to supply the deficiency, and sold for the public benefit even the furniture of his palaces. It was necessary to take immediate measures for reducing the rebellion in Germany. The emperor, who had now experienced the disposition of L. Verus, could neither venture to trust him with the command of the army, nor with the equally important task of governing Rome in his absence. He therefore, in concert with the senate, obtained from them a decree, that both the Augusti should march against the revolted nations. They accordingly set out together for Aquileia, but Marcus Aurelius was in a few months happily deprived of his colleague, and the empire of its fears, by the death of Verus. Of this German war historians have furnished us with no detail; Marcus Aurelius, we know, finished it in a few campaigns, and had granted the rebellious nations favorable terms of peace, when he was recalled to Italy by the revolt

of Avidius Cassius, who, upon a false report of his death, had caused himself to be proclaimed emperor. This insurrection, however, was speedily terminated by the death of Cassius, who was murdered by one of his own officers.

Aurelius now undertook a progress into Asia, where some disorders had made his presence necessary. Here he received the homage of all the eastern nations. He appeared, says an ancient author of that time, like a benevolent deity, diffusing around him universal peace and happiness; he was absent from Rome seven years, and his return was celebrated by the sincerest joy of his people.

His last military expedition was against the Marcomanni, and others of the German nations, who had again taken up arms. He had proceeded far to the reduction of those obstinate rebels, whom he must soon have brought under subjection, when, to the unspeakable grief and loss of the empire, he died in Pannonia, in the fifty-ninth year of his age, and the nineteenth of his reign. His memory was long revered by posterity, and above a century after his death many persons preserved the image of Marcus Aurelius among their household gods. From the death of Domitian, which happened in the 96th year of the Christian era, to that of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, which took place in the 180th, a period of eighty-four years, the Roman empire had enjoyed the greatest prosperity and happiness. It was governed by absolute power, but this power was under the direction of wisdom and virtue. "The armies," says Gibbon, "were restrained by the firm, yet gentle hand of five successive emperors, whose characters and authority commanded involuntary respect. The forms of the civil administration were carefully preserved by Trajan, Adrian, and the Antonines, who delighted in the image of liberty, and were pleased with considering themselves as the accountable ministers of the laws. Such princes deserved the honor of restoring the republic, had the Romans of their days been capable of enjoying a rational freedom."

Commodus was born soon after the elevation of his father Marcus Aurelius to the throne. He inherited none of the virtues of Aurelius, but resembled much his mother Faustina, a princess second only to Messalina in every species of vice. It was almost the only weakness of M. Aurelius, that he was blind to the infamous character of his wife and son. He even conferred honors and titles on those whom all but himself knew to be the acknowledged gallants of Faustina; and by a blamable innovation, he had caused his son Commodus to be declared Augustus in his own lifetime. Commodus was in his twentieth year, when, by the death of his father, he succeeded to the throne. His first step was to purchase a disgraceful peace with the barbarians in Germany—impatient to get rid, without the fatigue of fighting, of the trouble of a war. From his infancy he had discovered an

aversion to whatever was rational or liberal, and an excessive attachment to the amusements of the populace, the sports of the circus and amphitheatre, the combats of gladiators, and the hunting of wild beasts. It was his highest and only ambition to excel in these exercises: he fought as a common gladiator in the circus—and his favorite epithet was that of the Roman Hercules, which is still to be seen upon his coins and medals. His whole conduct was equally odious and contemptible, and the public measures of his reign consist of nothing but the detection of some conspiracies which the hatred of his subjects and his own cruelty and inhumanity could not fail to excite. One conspiracy, at length, delivered the empire of its tyrant. His concubine Marcia, his chamberlain, and the commander of his guard, had ventured to remonstrate with him on the indecency of an emperor displaying himself as a combatant in the public games. This was an offence which could not be forgiven, and he accordingly determined their immediate destruction. Marcia found the list of his intended victims written in his own hand. She made haste to anticipate his purpose, and caused this worthless and inglorious wretch to be strangled, in the thirty-second year of his age and the thirteenth of his reign.

Lætus, captain of the prætorian guards, who had conducted the conspiracy which rid the world of Commodus, bestowed the empire on Publius Helvetius Pertinax, a man of obscure extraction, but who, by his virtues and military talents, had raised himself to rank and esteem. The soldiers were promised a large donative, and the people, who respected the character of Pertinax, recognised him for their sovereign with the utmost demonstrations of joy. He applied himself immediately to the reformation of the abuses introduced by his predecessor, but his zeal for this reformation transported him beyond the bounds of prudence. The prætorian guards, debauched and effeminate in their morals and constitution, bore with great impatience the severity of that discipline to which they were now subjected, and regretted the happy licentiousness of the former reign. Lætus, the prefect, who expected that his services would entitle him to rule as a favorite minister, was disappointed by the austerity of the government of Pertinax. These discontents soon increased to such a degree as to become insurmountable; and the too virtuous Pertinax, after a reign of only eighty-six days, was openly murdered in the palace by the same hands which had placed him on the throne.

A transaction followed which was shameful beyond example: Sulpicianus, the father-in-law of Pertinax, demanded the empire from the prætorians, who replied to him, that he should have his chance for it at a fair auction, as they had resolved to bestow it on the highest bidder. Didius Julianus, a wealthy senator, was at table when this intelligence was brought him. His wife, and the parasites who surrounded him, persuaded him he should embrace

this opportunity of ascending a throne, which his virtues had long merited. He repaired instantly to the prætorian camp, and bidding at once a considerable sum beyond the offer of Sulpicianus, he was immediately proclaimed emperor. The obsequious senate made no scruple to confirm his election. He took his way to the palace, where, it is said, the first object that struck his eyes was the headless trunk of Pertinax, and the lugal entertainment which had been prepared for his supper. He viewed both with equal indifference, for he foresaw not what awaited him.

The people, not yet lost to every sense of their own importance, considered this measure as the last and severest insult on the Roman name. They gave free vent to their opinions; they openly execrated Didius as a usurper, and invited the legions in the provinces to assert the injured dignity of the empire. Amongst the generals who commanded those distant legions was Pescennius Niger. He was at that time in the government of Syria, when he received the request of the people to avenge the murder of Pertinax. The people of Asia solicited him to assume the purple himself, and he was easily prevailed upon. But at the same time that he was proclaimed in Asia, Decimus Clodius Albinus was proclaimed by the troops in Britain, and Septimius Severus in Illyria. Albinus, of known courage but of doubtful moral character, was sprung from one of the noblest families in Rome. Severus, an African by birth, owed his favor with the soldiers in a great measure to the high regard he had always professed for the character of Pertinax; but above all, to the promise of a donative superior to the price at which the wealthy Didius had purchased the empire. Saluted by his soldiers with the highest acclamations, and hailed by the title of Augustus, Severus marched directly to Rome. The prætorians, on the news of his approach, immediately abandoned Didius to his fate: and the senate, without ceremony condemned him to be executed in the imperial palace. He reigned sixty-six days.

The almost incredible expedition of Severus, who conducted in a few days a numerous army from the banks of the Danube to those of the Tiber, proves at once, as Mr. Gibbon has remarked, the uncommon plenty produced at this time by the agriculture and commerce of the empire, the good state of the roads, the discipline of the legions, and the indolent, subdued temper of the provinces.

Severus immediately ordered the corrupted and insolent troops of the prætorians to assemble unarmed on a large plain without the city. They obeyed in terror for their fate. He caused them to be surrounded with the Illyrian legions, and then sharply reproaching them with the murder of Pertinax, and the disgraceful sale of the empire, (which he and his troops had, however, so accurately imitated,) he dismissed them with ignominy from their trust, and banished the whole of them, on pain of death, to the dis-

tance of one hundred miles from Rome. He then created a new guard, which he composed of soldiers of all different countries.

Matters in the meantime wore an unfavorable aspect in the extremities of the empire. Both the east and west were in arms against Severus. Finding himself unable at the same time to march against both, he endeavored to secure the friendship of Albinus, by appointing him his successor in the empire, with the title of Cæsar; and having thus conciliated this powerful rival, he instantly marched against Niger in Asia. The armies soon met; and by the successful issue of three battles, in one of which Niger lost his life, he found himself without a rival, and master of the empire. His victories were succeeded by a conduct little short of that of a Marius or an Octavius. His proscription almost exterminated the army of Niger; and the miserable remnant which escaped were driven to seek shelter amongst the Parthians, to whom they taught the use of the Roman arms.

Severus was now no longer under the necessity of keeping terms with Albinus. He deprived him accordingly of the title of Cæsar, evincing clearly that it had been from necessity, not choice, he had ever bestowed it. Provoked at this usage, Albinus assumed a more illustrious denomination, caused himself to be proclaimed emperor, and marched for Italy. Fortune still attended the arms of Severus; he defeated Albinus in a decisive battle near Lyons; and this general, anticipating the fate which awaited him, preferred dying by his own hand. The temper of Severus, naturally cruel, found many victims in those who had favored the parties of his rival competitors. He examined the papers of Albinus, and thence found pretext for sacrificing forty of the senators. He seemed to take pleasure in degrading that order, and his intention seemed to be to extinguish every trace of the ancient republican administration, and erect the perfect fabric of an absolute monarchy. It became, therefore, his object to gain the affection of the soldiers, whom he attached to himself by every favor which he could bestow. Nor was his policy less conspicuous in the employment of men of talents, who in their writings and discourses instilled into the minds of the people the doctrines of passive obedience, and duty of absolute submission to the will of their master. Dion Cassius, the historian, appears to have been commissioned to form these opinions into a system, and the Pandectæ of the Roman law afford evidence that the advocates and judges coöperated all to the same end.

Having thus secured his authority by every precaution which he esteemed necessary, he applied himself, with a policy certainly both able and praiseworthy, to promote the interests of the empire. His conduct in the administration of justice was exemplary. His laws were wise and judicious, and the fame of the Roman arms in no period since the republic had risen higher than in the reign of Severus. He delighted to affirm, and he had reason

certainly to glory in it, that having received the empire oppressed with foreign and domestic wars, he left it in profound, universal, and honorable peace. To the military and political talents of Severus was allied a taste for the fine arts, more especially for architecture. The most eminent of the civil lawyers flourished under his reign—Ulpian, Paulus, and Papinian, who brought the system of Roman jurisprudence to its highest perfection.

Severus had two sons, Caracalla and Geta, who distinguished themselves in their infancy by a fixed and implacable hatred against each other. This unhappy and unnatural discord clouded the latter days of Severus. With a view of obviating the evil effects which the flattery of a court produced on their minds, the emperor seized the occasion of the war in Britain to carry them along with him, after associating them both with himself in the empire. Severus was at this time sixty years of age, and enfeebled with disease. The Caledonians, under the command of Fingal, invaded the Roman frontier, and defeated, on the banks of the river Carron, Caracalla, whom Ossian names *the son of the king of the world*. During the course of this war in Britain, it is shocking to relate that the abandoned Caracalla more than once attempted the life of his father, who, at length, broken by disease, died at York, in the 211th year of the Christian era. Caracalla and Geta agreed to divide the empire, the former retaining the western part, and the latter, Asia and the eastern provinces. The mutual hatred of these two brothers was now fomented by their association in the government. Caracalla, at length worn out by the struggle, and unable to bear longer with his rival, caused him to be openly assassinated in the arms of his mother Julia, and had the address to persuade the people that he was compelled to this atrocious deed by motives of self-preservation. On this subject Ælius Spartianus has transmitted a fact, which strongly marks the degeneracy of the Roman character, and that abject servility with which the highest ranks of the state submitted to the yoke of tyranny.

Caracalla, after the death of his brother Geta, thought it necessary to apologize to the senate for a deed so dark and unnatural. He ordered a body of his guards to enter the senate-house, and two armed soldiers to post themselves at the side of every senator. Then gravely walking up to the consul's chair, he pronounced a studied harangue, setting forth the imperious necessity of the action, and urging that his concern for the interests of the state had, in this single instance, overcome his fraternal affection and the humanity of his nature. It may be believed that the Conscript Fathers were in no disposition to dispute the force of his arguments. Caracalla was now proclaimed sole emperor, and one of the first acts of his administration was to put to death the celebrated lawyer Papinian, who had refused to justify his conduct to the people. His reign, which was nothing but one continued scene

of most complicated cruelties, was at last terminated by the assassination of the tyrant, in the sixth year of his government.

Those disorders in the empire which, as we have seen, began with the reign of Commodus, continued for about a century, till the accession of Diocletian. That interval was filled up by the reigns of Heliogabalus, Alexander Severus, Maximin, Gordian, Decius Gallus, Valerianus, Gallienus, Claudius, Aurelian, Tacitus, Probus, and Carus. The history of those reigns has been brilliantly given by Mr. Gibbon: and pleasure and profit must ever accompany the productions of that able, though sometimes dangerous, pen; but our plan confines us necessarily to such general views as furnish useful lessons of the knowledge of mankind, and, excluding all minuteness of detail, looks only to those circumstances which may tend to illustrate the great doctrines of politics or of morality. In that catalogue of names which we enumerated, Valerian, a prince of considerable virtues, but enfeebled by age before he attained the empire, was the first of the Roman emperors who perished in captivity. In an unsuccessful expedition against Sapor, king of Persia, he was taken prisoner, treated, as is said, with every circumstance of indignity, and languished the remainder of his days in misery. During the reign of his son Gallienus, there were actually nineteen pretenders to the sovereignty of different parts of the Roman empire. One of these, a native of Palmyra, Odenathus, by an effectual opposition to the progress of Sapor in Syria, was the preserver of that valuable province. Gallienus, sensible of his merits, conferred on him the title of Augustus; and Odenathus, like an independent sovereign, bequeathed at his death his crown to his widow Zenobia. Claudius, the successor of Gallienus, occupied in his wars against the German nations, allowed Zenobia to reign in peace over several of the Asiatic provinces, to which she added, by conquest, the kingdom of Egypt. For five years she maintained a splendid and politic dominion. But Aurelian, the successor of Claudius, after the reduction of the Germans, and the recovery of Gaul, Spain, and Britain, out of the hands of Tetricus, a bold usurper, turned the arms of the empire against this heroic queen of the East. She defended her dominions with a manly spirit, and maintained a siege in her capital of Palmyra, which for a while baffled the utmost efforts of the Roman arms. The city, however, at length surrendered, and Zenobia, attempting to escape by flight upon the back of a dromedary, was taken and conveyed a prisoner to Aurelian. He brought the captive princess to Rome, where she, together with Tetricus, graced the triumph of Aurelian; the queen bound in fetters of gold. The emperor assigned her an elegant villa, near Rome, for her residence. The Syrian queen gradually sunk into a Roman matron; her daughters married into Roman families; and her race was not yet extinct in the fifth century.

The succeeding reigns of Tacitus, Probus, and Carus, occupy

a space of nine years, in the first seven of which—the reigns of Tacitus and Probus—the Roman empire was seen in a state both of splendor and of happiness. To Carus succeeded Diocletian, who began his reign in the 284th year of the Christian era, and who soon evinced himself a prince of the greatest talents in every respect, but more especially as a politician. He may be considered, like Augustus, as the founder of a new empire. By birth a Dalmatian, and of mean extraction, he had yet raised himself, by his merit, to the supreme command in the army; and, having gained the empire, he determined to govern it by a new system of administration. He divided into four different governments the whole of the imperial dominions, and all the departments of authority, civil and military. There were appointed to these, four different governors, with equal powers. Diocletian associated Maximian with himself as his colleague in the empire, with the title of Augustus; and bestowed on his two generals, Galerius and Constantius, the titles of Cæsars.

The four princes had each their distinct department: Galerius was stationed on the Danube to guard the Illyrian provinces: Constantius had the command of Gaul, Spain, and Britain: Maximian that of Italy and Africa; and Diocletian of Thrace, Egypt, and the Asiatic provinces. Each was supreme in his own district, and, what is truly singular, and evinces the talents of Diocletian, all lived in harmony, and in the most perfect good understanding with each other. This plan of dividing the empire was evidently a bad one in itself, nor could it possibly have been supported but by the superior and controlling genius of Diocletian. He allotted, in appearance, an equality of powers to his colleagues; but, in fact, the eminence of his own character and the superiority of his genius gave him always a decided preeminence, and the other princes were little more than his viceroys or lieutenants. At times he would make them understand this even with arrogance and harshness. Galerius had been defeated by the Persians, on which occasion Diocletian treated him with the utmost contempt, making him follow his chariot on foot; nor was he restored to favor till he had by his successes regained his credit, and with this an equality of power.

Under the reign of this emperor, all vestiges of the ancient liberty of the Roman constitution were entirely annihilated. The sovereign assumed that ensign of royalty most odious to the Romans, the diadem, and introduced at home all the magnificent ceremonial of the Persian court. The name of the Senate of Rome continued to be respected, but this body ceased to have the smallest weight or influence in affairs of state. By the vigor of Diocletian's administration, and the active abilities of his associates in power, the Roman arms regained for a while their ancient splendor, and general good order pervaded the empire. It was during this reign, also, that the northern barbarians, who for some

time before had made themselves known by some partial irruptions, poured down in prodigious swarms upon the extremities of the empire. The Scythians, Goths, Sarmatians, Alani, and Quadi, began to make dreadful inroads, and for a while every successive defeat seemed only to increase their strength and perseverance.

At this period, Diocletian, along with his colleague Maximian, surprised the world by resigning at once the royal dignity, and, leaving the government in the hands of the two Cæsars, voluntarily returned to the condition of private citizens. Diocletian retired to Salona, the place of his nativity, now Spalatro, in Dalmatia, where he built a palace superior in extent and magnificence to any of his predecessors. In this seclusion from the cares of government he lived for several years, and was wont to say, that he counted the day of his retreat as the beginning of his life. Maximian, who had abdicated not from individual choice, but in consequence of a promise exacted on his admission to a share in the government, retired less willingly to Lucania. Constantius and Galerius now jointly governed the Roman empire, but soon after, Constantius died in Britain, and his son Constantine, succeeding in the command of the troops, caused himself to be proclaimed emperor in the city of York. He immediately acquainted Galerius of this event, who was by no means heartily disposed to acknowledge his nomination. On Constantine he conferred, or rather continued to him, the title of Cæsar, whilst he associated with himself in the *empire* his favorite Severus. Meanwhile, Maximian was prevailed upon by his son Maxentius to abandon his retirement, and to resume the purple. They engaged, defeated, and put to death Severus; and Maximian, to unite his interest with Constantine against Galerius, gave him his daughter in marriage, by which alliance Constantine acquired a double title to the empire. Soon after this, Maximian, for what cause is not ascertained, died by his own hand, and Galerius was carried off by a mortal disease. Maxentius and Constantine, therefore, remained upon the stage to contend for the prize of undivided empire. It was at this time that Constantine, being converted to Christianity—(as is said, by a miraculous vision,)—the true religion, after struggling with every opposition which ignorance, credulity, and persecution could have brought against it, ascended at last the imperial throne. Maxentius, on the other hand, from hatred to his rival, exerted himself in the most violent persecution of all who professed that religion. The Christians were at this time extremely numerous, both at Rome and in the provinces, and it became, therefore, an event of the greatest joy to them, that Maxentius in the first battle was defeated and slain, leaving Constantine undisputed master of the Roman empire.

The first step of his administration was to break up the pretorian bands, a measure equally politic for his own safety and agreeable to the people. He re-established the senate in its ancient deliber-

ative rights; commenced the repair of Rome and the other cities of Italy; and used his utmost endeavor by a firm, though a gentle and equitable administration, to promote the happiness and interest of his people. Aware of the danger of disgusting the public mind by any sudden or violent innovation upon those opinions which long custom had rendered sacred, he accepted the title of *Pontifex Maximus*, and in his first edicts only granted to the Christians the public exercise of their religion; but his own example daily increased the number of proselytes, and he soon after began to establish churches for their worship. In these first years of his reign, the civil administration of Constantine was excellent. Every approach to oppression in the officers of the revenue met with an immediate check, and he abrogated that cruel institution which inflicted corporal punishment upon those who were debtors to the state. His maxim was, that equity ought ever to preponderate over strict law, and ought to determine all cases wherein law is doubtful. But amid these excellent features in the character of Constantine, it is painful to remark that a disposition to cruelty appeared, which sullied much of his glory. In an expedition against the Franks, a northern nation who had begun to make inroads on the Gauls, the prisoners taken in war were, with the most shocking inhumanity, exposed in the amphitheatre to be devoured by wild beasts.

One Licinius, a Dacian, had by Galerius been nominated Cæsar, and on the death of Galerius maintained possession of the Asiatic provinces. Constantine had not thought it expedient to dispute his right, while as yet his own was not thoroughly established, and had even virtually acknowledged it by giving him his sister in marriage. Licinius was a persecutor of the Christians, and this became soon a sufficient ground for Constantine to shake him off. He accordingly declared war against him as an enemy to God, and arming a fleet of 200 galleys, and 130,000 men, he attacked him in Asia, and gained a complete victory. His rival was made prisoner, and was promised his life, but this promise was shamefully and dishonorably broken, and Licinius strangled in prison.

Constantine, now absolute and sole master of the empire, proceeded openly to signalize his zeal for Christianity. He ordered the temples to be shut, and prohibited sacrifices, but at the same time published an edict in the East, allowing universal toleration. This edict, however, which certainly seemed inconsistent with the general tenor of his principles, could not prevent the rising of a fanatical zeal for their peculiar tenets in the minds both of Christians and of heathens, which soon produced the most violent and irreconcilable animosities. Constantine, returning from his Asiatic expedition, alienated the minds of his Roman subjects by two extraordinary acts of cruelty, the murder of his son Crispus and his step-mother Fausta, upon light suspicions of some infamous connections having taken place between them. Many other indi-

viduals of rank were put to death on the evidence of informers, and on the most vague and general suspicions. The cruelty of the emperor became excessive. Rome cried out against him as a second Nero, and the populace openly insulted him.

Whether it was the disgust he conceived at this decided change in the minds of the Romans, or solely an ambitious and unsettled disposition which led to his design of altering the seat of empire, it is not easy to determine. He fixed his eyes, however, on Byzantium, to which he gave the name of Constantinople. He erected there the most superb structures, and in order to people his new city, he made a law by which no Asiatic should have the right of disposing of his estate by testament, unless he possessed a dwelling-house in Constantinople. Those, again, who resided there were gratified by a variety of alluring privileges; and by means of these he drew the poorer inhabitants from Rome, whilst the richer voluntarily followed the prince and his court. The grandees brought with them their slaves, and Rome in a few years became almost depopulated. Italy was also greatly exhausted of her inhabitants, and Constantinople swelled at once to the most overgrown dimensions. When the empire was thus divided, all riches naturally centered in the new capital. At this period, the German mines were unknown, those of Italy and Gaul were inconsiderable, as were also those of Spain. Italy was now a waste of desolated gardens. It had no pecuniary supplies from commerce, and being still subjected to the same taxes as when it was the seat of empire, its miserable situation may be easily conceived.

After thus weakening or rather annihilating the ancient capital of the empire, Constantine drew off from the frontiers the legions which were stationed on the banks of the large rivers, and distributed them into the provinces. This measure had two most pernicious effects. It left the frontiers to the mercy of the barbarous nations, and enervated the troops by the effeminate pleasures of the great cities. Luxury, which, in all its different shapes, pervaded even the extremities of the empire, reigned absolute in the centre. Constantine himself in every thing affected the Asiatic splendor and ceremonial. He wore the diadem, and assumed a number of high-sounding, empty titles; his amusements were at once costly and effeminate; his festivals and public spectacles most profusely luxurious. Towards the conclusion of his reign, the Goths, making another invasion, were repulsed and defeated, but by imprudently raising many of them to offices of dignity, he gave to these barbarians a kind of footing in the Roman empire.

Sapor II., king of Persia, having made an inroad upon Mesopotamia, Constantine marched against him. He repulsed the Persian troops, but after the victory fell sick at Nicomedia, and there died at the age of sixty-three, and in the thirtieth year of his reign. His character cannot easily be drawn with impartiality. Talents and ability in no common degree he certainly possessed;

but as to the other points of his character, the professed pictures of historians are so extremely contradictory, that neither Pagan nor Christian writers deserve to be in any degree relied on. By the one class he is held forth as a shining example of universal virtue; by the other he is represented as a Proteus in every variety of vice. "We may," says the Abbé Fleury, "form an impartial judgment of the character of this emperor, by believing all the faults ascribed to him by the Bishop Eusebius, and all the good spoken of him by Zosimus." *

## CHAPTER III.

Change in the System of Policy and Government introduced by Constantine—Pretorian Prefects—Proconsuls—Counts and Dukes—Taxes—Free Gifts—Seat of Empire translated to Constantinople—Division of the Empire—Julian—His artful Hostility to Christianity—Jovian—Valentinian—Irruptions of the Goths—Of the Huns—Valens—Gratian—Theodosius—Valentinian the Second.

THERE were circumstances which rendered the reign of Constantine a remarkable epoch in the history of the Roman empire; and, as it is of consequence that we should become acquainted with that new system of policy and government which at this time was introduced, and which was so materially different from that constitution with which we have hitherto been acquainted, a few observations upon this subject may neither be impertinent nor uninstructive; more especially as they are connected with those internal causes which were now silently undermining the Roman power.

The distinctions of personal merit, so conspicuous under the republican form of government, were gradually weakening from the time that the imperial dignity arose, and now were almost totally obliterated. In their room was substituted a rigid subordination of rank and office, which went through all the departments of the state. Every rank was fixed, its dignity was displayed in a variety of trifling ceremonies; and, as Mr. Gibbon has remarked, in his favorite metaphoric style, "At this time the system of the Roman government might, by a philosophic observer, have been mistaken for a splendid theatre filled with players of every

* Hist. Eccl., tome iii. p. 233.

character and degree, who repeated the language and imitated the manners of the emperor, their original model."

The epithet *Illustrious*, which belonged only to the highest ranks of the state, was conferred upon four distinct classes of officers and magistrates: 1. The Consuls and Patricians; 2. The Pretorian Prefects of Rome and Constantinople; 3. The Masters General of the Cavalry and Infantry; and 4. The Seven Ministers of the Palace who exercised their sacred functions about the person of the emperor.

The ancient consuls were chosen by the suffrages of the people, and, during the government of the first emperors, by the real or apparent suffrage of the senate; but from the reign of Diocletian, they were created by the sole authority of the emperor. A magnificent festival was held at their inauguration; and their names and portraits, on tables of ivory, were dispersed to all the provinces and cities of the empire; but they had not a shadow of power—they no longer presided in the councils of the state, nor executed the resolutions of peace or war; and their names served for nothing more than to give the legal date of the year.

The ancient patrician families had been long since extinguished, and every dignity and distinction which arose from birth had been gradually obliterated, from the time that the offices of state had become common to the plebeians. The latter emperors preserved indeed the title of patricians, but it was now a personal and not an hereditary distinction. It was bestowed generally on their favorites as a title of honor, or upon ministers and magistrates who had grown old in office.

The authority of the pretorian prefects was very different from such nominal and inefficient dignities. From the time that the pretorian bands were suppressed by Constantine, these haughty officers, who had been little less than the masters of the empire, were now reduced to the station of useful and obedient ministers. They had lost all military command; but they became the civil magistrates of the provinces. The empire was divided under four governors. The prefect of the East had a jurisdiction from the Nile to the banks of the river Phasis in Colchis, and from the mountains of Thrace to the frontiers of Persia. The prefect of Illyrium, or Illyria, governed the provinces of Pannonia, Dacia, Macedonia, and Greece. The prefect of Italy superintended not only that country, but Rhætia, as far as the banks of the Danube, the Mediterranean islands, and the opposite coast of Africa. The prefect of the Gauls governed these provinces, and likewise Spain and Britain. These officers had the supreme administration of justice and of the finances. They watched over the conduct of the provincial magistrates, removed the negligent, and inflicted punishments on the guilty. An appeal was competent to them from all the inferior jurisdictions, and Constantine disallowed any appeal from their sentences to himself.

The cities of Rome and Constantinople were exempted from the authority of the pretorian prefects. They had each their own prefect, who was the supreme magistrate of the city. They were presidents of the city, and all municipal authority was derived from them alone. They had the superintendence of the police, the care of the port, the aqueducts, the common sewers, the distribution of the public allowance of corn and provision. A perfect equality was established between those dignities and the four pretorian prefects.

Such were the magistrates who formed the first class in the state, which was termed *Illustres*. Inferior to these, were those magistrates who were termed *Spectabiles*. Such were the proconsuls of Asia, Achaia, and Africa, and the military Counts and Dukes [*Comites* and *Duces*] or generals of the imperial armies.

The third class of the magistrates, inferior to the two former, had the denomination of *Clarissimi*. This class consisted of the governors of the provinces, who were entrusted, under the authority of the prefects or their deputies, with the administration of justice and the management of the finances in their respective districts.

The supreme jurisdiction exercised by the pretorian prefects over the armies of the empire was afterwards transferred to eight Masters-General of the cavalry and infantry. Under their orders, thirty-five military commanders were stationed in the provinces. These were distinguished by the titles of Counts and Dukes, and they received each, besides their pay, an allowance sufficient to maintain 190 servants, and 158 horses. They had no concern in the administration of justice or of the revenue; but they exercised a command over the troops independent of the authority of the magistrates. This necessarily created a divided interest, which relaxed the vigor of the state. The civil and the military magistrates could have no good understanding, and a source of dissension was thus established, which had the most pernicious consequences.

Of the seven Ministers of the Palace, who were likewise entitled to the rank of Illustrious, the first was the *Præpositus*, or Prefect of the Bedchamber, an eunuch whose duty was to perform all the menial services about the emperor; but whose office was at the same time esteemed so honorable as to rank before the proconsuls of Greece or Asia—a strong mark of the corruption of manners. The second of the ministers entitled to the same rank was the Master of the Offices, who had the principal administration of public affairs—a sort of Secretary of State, having subordinate to him a great many other secretaries, who had each their different department. The third was the Quæstor. In some respects his office resembled that of a modern *chancellor*: he was the mouth of the emperor in pronouncing his edicts, and he prepared the form and style of the imperial laws. The fourth was

the Count of the *Sacred Largesses*, or the treasurer-general of the revenue, under whom were twenty-nine provincial receivers. His jurisdiction extended over the mines, over the mint, and even over the palace treasuries. He likewise directed all the linen and woollen manufactures. Linen, it must be observed, though not anciently in use among the Romans, had become a common wear for the women even in the time of the elder Pliny. The fifth minister of the palace was the Count or Treasurer of the Private Estate, whose office was to administer that revenue of the emperor which arose from his demain or territorial property, which he had in most of the provinces, and from the confiscations and forfeitures. The sixth and seventh were the two Counts of the Domestics, who commanded those bands of cavalry and infantry which guarded the emperor's person. The number of these troops amounted to 3,500 men.

The intercourse between the court and provinces was maintained by the construction of roads, and by the institution of *Posts*; but these establishments paved the way for a most intolerable abuse. Some hundred agents, who were afterwards increased to some thousands, were employed, under the jurisdiction of the masters of the offices, to announce the names of the annual consuls, and to report the edicts of the emperor through all the provinces. These people were, in fact, nothing else but the spies of government—who were encouraged, by rewards, to communicate from time to time all sorts of intelligence from the remote corners of the empire to its chief seat; to watch the progress of all treasonable designs, and discover such persons as they should find harboring any symptom of disaffection; they were consequently the objects of terror and of consummate hatred: circumstances which prevented their employment from being ever accepted, unless by men of bad character and desperate fortune, who exercised without scruple the most unjust and insolent oppression.

Every institution was now calculated to support the fabric of despotism. The use of torture, from which, in the happier days of the Roman government, every one who enjoyed the privileges of a citizen was exempted, began now to be employed without regard to this distinction; in place of which a few special exemptions were granted by the emperor in favor of those of the rank of *illustres*, of bishops and professors of the liberal arts, soldiers, municipal officers, and children under the age of puberty; but these exceptions sanctified the use of torture in all other cases.

To these grievances may be added the oppressive taxes. The word *indiction*, which serves to ascertain the chronology of the middle ages, was derived from the practice of the emperor's signing with his own hand an edict prescribing the annual measure of the tribute to be levied, and the term allowed for payment of it. The measure or quantity was ascertained by a *census*, or survey, made by persons appointed for that purpose, through all the

provinces, who measured the lands, took account of their nature, whether arable, pasture, wood, or vineyard, and made an estimate of their medium value, from an average produce of five years. The numbers of slaves and of cattle were likewise reported, and the proprietors were examined on their oath as to the true state of their affairs. Part of the tribute specified by the indiction was paid in money, and part in the produce of the lands; and so exorbitant were these taxes, that the husbandmen found it their interest to let their lands lie uncultivated, as the burdens increased in a greater proportion to the profits than those profits. Hence the agriculture of the Roman provinces was almost ruined, and population, which keeps pace with plenty, gradually diminished.

But not only were the proprietors of land borne down by the weight of these taxes: the hand was equally severe on all classes of the citizens. Every branch of commercial industry paid its rated tribute. All the objects of merchandise, whether of home growth or of importation, as the products of arts and manufactures, were highly taxed; and as the tribute on land was made effectual by the seizure of personal property, that on personal property was enforced by corporal punishments. The cruel treatment of the insolvent debtors of the state, which, under some of the former emperors, had reached the height of barbarity, was, however, mitigated by an edict of Constantine, in which he disclaims the use of racks and scourges for the punishment of debtors, and allots a spacious prison for their confinement.

To these supplies of the imperial revenue must be added those donations, called *Free Gifts*, from the several cities and provinces of the monarchy, which it was customary to bestow as often as the emperor announced his accession, his consulship, the birth of a son, the creation of a Cæsar, a victory over the barbarians, or any other event of great importance. These, which were now presents of money, came in place of the ancient offerings of crowns of gold made by the cities of Italy to a victorious general. The free gift of the senate of Rome, upon such occasions as we have mentioned, amounted to 1600 pounds weight of gold, (about £64,000 sterling,) and the other cities of the empire, we may suppose, paid in proportion.

But none of the institutions of Constantine were so fatal to the empire as those which he introduced into the military discipline. A distinction was established between the troops which were stationed in the remote provinces, and those which remained in the heart of the empire; the latter were termed *Palatines*, by way of superiority, and enjoyed a much higher pay, which enabled them, except in time of war, to indulge themselves in idleness, indolence, and every species of luxury. The former, termed *the Borderers*—who, in fact, had the care of the empire, and were exposed to perpetual dangers—had a very small allowance of pay, with the mortification of feeling themselves held of inferior

consideration, and these were, in fact, nothing else than the slaves of a despot. Constantine likewise, from the timid policy of securing against tumults and insurrections among the troops—which were extremely formidable while the legion contained its ancient number of 5,000, 6,000, or even 8,000 or 9,000 men—reduced the number of men in the legion to 1,000 or to 1,500; so that each of these weakened bodies, awed by the sense of its own imbecility, could now attempt no conspiracy that was formidable. The whole body of the army was likewise debased by the intermixture of the barbarian nations, the Scythians, Goths, and Germans, who henceforth bore a very great proportion in each of the legions.

Such was the state of the Roman empire at the time of the translation of its seat from Rome to Constantinople. An authority, vigorously despotic, preserved, as yet, the union of this immense mass, which was laboring internally with the seeds of corruption and dissolution. In the capital of the empire, the Roman name owed its chief lustre now to pomp and magnificence—a poor substitute for that real dignity, derived, in former times, from its heroic and patriotic virtues.

Constantine, with a very destructive policy, had divided the empire among no less than five princes; three of them his sons, and two nephews. Constantius, the youngest and most ambitious of the sons, soon got rid of the nephews. They were massacred by the soldiers, along with many others of his relations, and several of the principal courtiers. The brothers quarrelled among themselves; the two elder, Constans and Constantinus, took up arms, and the latter falling in battle, Constans became sole master of the Western empire. This, however, he did not long enjoy, being soon after assassinated by Magnentius, a German.

Constantius was now possessed of undivided legal authority, but had a formidable rival in Magnentius, whose party was much increased, for while the emperor indolently occupied himself in theological controversies, his best troops had sided with the usurper. Constantius made a dastardly offer of peace, which Magnentius rejected, and an engagement followed, which decided the fate of the empire. Constantius was successful, though he had not dared to take the field in person, but waited the event of the battle in a neighboring church. Magnentius took refuge in Gaul, where, being surrounded by the imperial legions, he, in a transport of despair, murdered his mother and several of his relations, and then stabbed himself with his own hand.

Two nephews of Constantine had escaped that massacre of his kindred by which Constantius had secured to himself an undivided empire: these were Gallus and Julian. The former, Constantius honored with the dignity of Cæsar, and appointed the city of Antioch for his residence, where for a short time he ruled the eastern provinces with a violent and tyrannical authority. Constantius, governed at that time by the eunuch Eusebius, was persuaded

that Gallus, by his enormities, had rendered himself unworthy of the dignity to which he had raised him. He sent an order for Gallus to repair to the imperial court, then at Milan, which that prince did not dare to disobey. He was instantly deprived of his guards, hurried to prison, and beheaded like the meanest malefactor.

A variety of civil broils, mutinies of the troops against their generals, had weakened the force of the armies, and left the western frontier to the mercy of the barbarians. The Franks, Saxons, and Alemanni ravaged the Gauls, and destroyed forty-five cities on the banks of the Rhine. Pannonia and Mœsia were laid waste by the Sarmatians, while the Persians made dreadful incursions upon the eastern empire. Constantius was wholly occupied with his religious controversies: but was fortunately prevailed on by his empress to take one measure most conducive to the general safety, which was to confer on his cousin Julian the title and dignity of Cæsar.

This prince, had he appeared in any other era than that in which two opposite religions were contending for pre-eminence, would have shone as a very illustrious character. He possessed many heroic qualities, and his mind was formed by nature to promote the greatness and the happiness of an empire. He had completed his studies at Constantinople and at Athens. In the latter city, the conversation of the Platonic philosophers had given him a strong disaste for the doctrines of Christianity, in which he had been educated: and what, unfortunately rivetted his aversion, was the example of his cousin, Constantius.

Constantius named Julian *Cæsar* at the age of twenty-three, and appointed him governor of Gaul; but with few troops, little money, and a very limited command; accountable to a set of veteran officers, whom the emperor appointed for his counsellors. Under all these disadvantages he soon showed distinguished abilities.

In the first year of his government he studied the art of war at Vienna, applied himself with ardor to the discipline of his troops, and partook himself, with his soldiers, of every fatigue to which the meanest were subjected. Two important objects were thus obtained—a well-regulated army, and a devoted affection of the troops to the person of their commander. With these advantages he soon signalized his military talents. He drove the barbarians out of Gaul, and carried the terror of his arms beyond the limits of the frontier. Constantius, in his conclave of bishops, arrogated to himself the honor of these victories, and was employed in holding ecclesiastical councils, while Sapor, the Persian, with a formidable army, broke in upon Mesopotamia. Julian was now become an object of jealousy to him: with a view of disarming him, he ordered him to send the best of his troops to Constantinople, to serve against the Persians; by which means so incon-

siderable a handful would remain with their commander, that the barbarians, with ease and impunity, could have regained what they had lost.

Julian prepared to obey, but the army took an opposite measure; they proclaimed him emperor, and forced him, apparently unwilling, to accept the purple.* He still preserved the show of allegiance, and wrote to Constantius, informing him of the proceedings of the army, and of the impossibility of removing them from the province without their commander. Constantius, with amazing folly, only repeated his orders in a more peremptory style; and Julian, congratulating himself that every scruple of honor was satisfied, openly shook off his submission, and took the field to maintain his right to the empire. He marched with rapidity into Greece. Italy was his own, and every thing submitted to his arms. Constantius escaped the ignominy that awaited him, by dying at this juncture of a fever in Cilicia.

Julian was now acknowledged through the whole empire. He began his reign by the reformation of a variety of civil abuses in the different departments of the state, abolishing superfluous offices, and striking at the root of luxury by sumptuary laws. He now gave a loose to his hatred against Christianity, but attacked that religion by a policy far more pernicious than open persecution. He began by reforming the Pagan theology; and artfully attending to the great difference between that and the Christian religion, which, to the purest doctrines of faith, joined the most excellent system of morality, he endeavored to give Paganism that morality which it wanted, thence confessing the excellence of Christianity by adopting its sublimest precepts. He drew up himself a plan of conduct for the priests, recommending to them a purity of life and uncorrupted integrity; thus to enforce by their example the doctrines which they sought to inculcate.† Certain modern

* The circumstances attending this event are extremely well painted by Mr. Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, ch. 22.

† The 19th, 22d, and 63d Epistles of Julian, and a separate fragment on the same subject, give a very strong picture of his zeal for pagan reformation. "The exercise of the sacred functions," says Julian, "requires an immaculate purity both of mind and body; and even when the priest is dismissed from the temple to the occupations of common life, it is incumbent on him to excel in decency and virtue the rest of his fellow citizens. He should never be seen in theatres or taverns. His conversation should be chaste, his diet temperate, his friends of honorable reputation. His studies should be suited to the sanctity of his profession. Licentious tales or comedies, or satires, must be banished from his library, which ought solely to consist of historical and philosophical writings; of history which is founded in truth, and of philosophy which is connected with religion. The impious orations of the Epicureans and Skeptics deserve his abhorrence and contempt; but he should diligently study the systems of Pythagoras, of Plato, and of the Stoics, which unanimously teach *that there are gods*; that the world is governed by *their* providence; that *their* goodness is the source of every temporal blessing; and that *they have prepared for the human soul a future state of reward or punishment*."

writers, unfriendly to our religion, have enlarged, with much apparent satisfaction, on the great clemency and moderation which Julian showed in his treatment of the Christians; affecting not to perceive that this seeming clemency and moderation was the most artful and the most dangerous policy that could have been employed against them: for let us observe how Julian conducted himself. He forbade the persecution of the Christians, whom he represented as deluded men, the objects of compassion, not of punishment; but declared, at the same time, that their *frenzy* (so he called it) prohibited all employments, civil or military. Their law, he said, prohibited all quarrels and dissensions; it was not, therefore, necessary that they should have the benefit of courts of justice to decide their differences. He prohibited them from teaching or learning grammar, rhetoric, or philosophy. These, he said, were pagan sciences, meant only by subtle writers whose principles the Christians were taught to abhor, and whose books contained tenets which must shock the pure morality of their religion. It is easy to perceive that this artful and insidious mode of attack was, in reality, much more destructive than the most sanguinary persecution.

This conduct of Julian would seem to argue a disposition at least entirely free from any tincture of superstition, and careless of all religion; but, in fact, Julian was, as a pagan, blinded by the most bigoted superstition. His belief in omens was ridiculous; his sacrifices were so numerous, that cattle were wanting to supply him with victims.* The expense of these religious rites became burdensome to the state, and was universally complained of.† He was even accused of the horrid abomination of human sacrifices. His enthusiasm and fanaticism, acknowledged even by his greatest panegyrists, "almost degrade him to the level of an Egyptian monk."—"Notwithstanding his own modest silence upon the subject, (says Mr. Gibbon,) we may learn from his faithful friend, the orator Libanius, that he lived in a perpetual intercourse with the gods and goddesses; that they descended upon earth to enjoy the conversation of their favorite hero; that they gently interrupted his slumbers by touching his hand or his hair; that they warned him of any impending danger, and conducted him by their infalli-

* Ammianus, though a pagan himself, and an admirer of the character of Julian, justly censures this part of his conduct:—"Hecatumbæ tamen sanguine plurimo aras crebritate nimia perfundebat, tauros aliquotes immolando centenos, et innumeros varii pecoris greges, avesque cunctas terra quæstas et mari." And he describes the soldiers rioting upon the flesh of the sacrifices, and duly gorging themselves with those dainties and with strong liquors, so that they were frequently carried to their quarters on the shoulders of the passengers. The enjoyment of such freedoms would very soon convert the army to the religion of their sovereign. Vid. Ammian. l. xxii. c. 12.

† Ammianus compares him in this respect to Marcus Cæsar, to whom the cattle were feigned to have made this ludicrous complaint—"The white oxen to Marcus Cæsar; If you conquer, we are undone."

ble wisdom in every action of his life; and that he had acquired such an intimate knowledge of his heavenly guests, as readily to distinguish the voice of Jupiter from that of Minerva, and the form of Apollo from the figure of Hercules." In short, this wise and philosophic emperor was, in matters of religion, one of the weakest, most bigoted, and superstitious of mankind.

Fortunately for Christianity, he died at a very early age. He intended to revenge the injuries which the empire had sustained from Sapor, and prepared to carry war into the heart of Asia. After a dangerous march through Assyria, and the siege and reduction of some of the principal towns, he advanced to the banks of the Tigris. Here, in an engagement with the Persians, Julian was slain at the age of thirty-one.

It is generally acknowledged that he had uncommon talents, and many of the virtues of a great prince: had not these virtues and great talents been disgraced by his inveterate hatred to Christianity, from the doctrines of which religion he had early apostatized.* Julian's attempt to rebuild the Temple of Jerusalem is well known. The supernatural check said to have been given to that attempt by an eruption of flames from the earth has occasioned much learned theological controversy. I shall not enter into the question; but must remark that the story is related by Julian's own friendly historian, Ammianus,† a sincere pagan, whose evidence in this matter is therefore less suspicious.

The death of Julian struck despair into the hearts of the Roman army. A leader, however, was immediately required, and the choice fell upon Jovian, a captain in the domestic guards. Though luxurious and even dissolute in his manners, he possessed many excellent qualities. A negotiation with Sapor was in the present conjuncture absolutely necessary. But the Persian, confident of his advantages, insisted on terms dishonorable to the Romans. He demanded five provinces to be restored, which had

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* Prudentius gives the following very just and impartial character of Julian.

"——Ductor fortissimus armis,
Conditor et legum celeberrimus; ore manuque
Consultor patriæ; sed non consultor habendæ
Religionis, amans tercentùm millia Divûm:
Perfidus ille Deo: sed non perfidus orbi."
Prudent. Apoth. 450, &c.

† Dr. Howel, in his valuable History of the World, has given the life of Julian almost in the words of Ammianus Marcellinus, who was an officer in Julian's army, and a witness of all his exploits, an impartial biographer, for he blames as well as praises. The abilities of Julian are sufficiently proved by his own literary compositions. In his Satire, termed the *Misopogon*, or Beardhater, he paints his own character with freedom and with wit; and we learn more from it, of the real dispositions of this singular man, than from the narratives of his historians. (The Misopogon is well abridged by Dr. Howel, vol. ii. c. i. s. 5.) His moral fable, entitled *the Cæsars*, is one of the most agreeable and instructive productions of ancient wit. For an abstract of it, see Gibbon's Decline and Fall, chap. 24.

been ceded by his grandfather to Galerius; and required, besides, several towns in Mesopotamia. It was absolutely necessary to grant these conditions, though the empire agreed to them with general dissatisfaction.

Jovian, having thus secured a peace, applied himself with zeal to the happiness of his subjects. He favored Christianity, and sought to heal the wounds which that religion had received from his predecessor. He showed, in the means which he adopted for promoting it, a policy equally artful with that of Julian for its destruction. In a council which he assembled at Antioch, he declared his resolution that no man should be molested on account of his religious tenets. He recalled the banished Christians, admitting them with the pagans, equally, to the exercise of all public employments; those commencements promised a happy reign; but the hopes of the empire were blasted as soon as they were formed, for Jovian died at the age of thirty-three, after a reign only of seven months.*

The army then in Bithynia chose Valentinian for their emperor—a man of obscure birth, but of considerable military reputation. He was illiterate, severe in his manners, and excessively avaricious; yet in other respects deserving of the throne. As soon as he was elected, he was urged to name a colleague. "You have elected me," said he, "your emperor; it is now my province to command, and it is yours to obey. I shall choose for myself a colleague, whom I think proper, and when I judge expedient." He afterwards named his brother Valens, to whom he gave the dominion of the East, reserving to himself the West. Valens had to oppose Sapor, who now attempted the conquest of Armenia; and Valentinian the barbarians, who poured down upon the western empire from every quarter. Previous, however, to any warlike expedition, Valentinian thought it necessary to establish a good political arrangement at home. The clergy had formerly been exempted from taxes, but Valentinian thought that, as the interest of the state was the concern of all its members, no order should be privileged. Though a Christian himself, his zeal was subservient to policy. He interfered in no theological disputes, leaving these to be determined by the clergy; and so far was he from persecuting the pagans, that he allowed them an unlimited toleration. These prudent measures prevented all religious disturbances; and the Christian religion silently made greater progress than if it had been intemperately promoted by the ardor of a zealot.

Valentinian now marched into Gaul, and repelled the Alemanni

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*The accounts of his death are various. Ammianus says, "He was suffocated in his sleep, either by the vapor of a newly-plastered room or the smoke of coals; or that he died of a surfeit."—Ammian. xxv. 10.

and other barbarous tribes, in a series of successful engagements. In these, however, the severity of his disposition was rigorously felt, and the Roman name was disgraced by many atrocious actions.

Valentinian gave peace to the Western empire; but the East was distracted by the imprudent zeal of Valens, who, intemperately promoting the cause of Arianism, invited a swarm of enemies upon the empire who, in the end, entirely subverted it. These were the Goths, a people originally inhabiting the country of Scandinavia, which the ancient authors have termed the nursery of the human race; *officina humani generis*. Montesquieu accounts for those prodigious inundations from the North, which argue an astonishing populousness of those countries which sent them out, by saying, "that the violence of the Romans had forced the peoples of the South to retire to the North," and that they now regorged upon the empire:* but we know of no violences equal to the production of that effect, and the barbarians who invaded the empire retained no traces of a southern origin, but showed, in their manners, customs, and laws, a genius and character entirely their own and strongly distinct from that of the nations of the South. Some centuries before the Christian era, the Goths had emigrated from the North; and some of their tribes, the Vandals, Heruli, and Lombards, had established themselves in Germany. In the second century, a vast body had fixed their residence on the banks of the Palus Mæotis; and had thence extended their conquests with great rapidity. Under the reign of Valens, they took possession of the province of Dacia, and were distinguished by the appellation of Ostrogoths and Visigoths, or Eastern and Western Goths—the first inhabiting the coasts of the Euxine Sea, and towards the mouth of the Danube; the latter dwelling along the banks of that river. They were a remarkable people; and their manners, laws, government, and customs are highly deserving of particular attention, as the great fountain from which the manners and policy of all the European nations are at this day derived. It will not, therefore, be impertinent to bestow some time in giving a particular view of this people, which I shall do when I have brought the Roman history to its period.

Julian had despised these invaders, and the terror of his name had kept them quiet during his reign. Procopius, the cousin of Julian, had attempted to wrest the throne from Valens, and obtained for that purpose the assistance of the Goths; but that emperor engaged them with success and compelled them to repass the Danube. Valentinian, in the meantime, engaged with the Alemanni in Germany, died upon that expedition, and was succeeded by Gratian, his eldest son, who was then in the sixteenth year of

* Mont., Grand. et Décad., chap. xvi.

his age. He had borne the title of Augustus from his ninth year, and his right to the empire was not disputed. The army joined with him his brother, Valentinian II., an infant four years old. The youth and inexperience of Gratian led him, in the beginning of his reign, to authorize some tyrannical and cruel acts, which appeared contrary to his natural disposition. Valens, in the mean time, in the East filled the empire with daily examples of vice and tyranny. He was detested by his subjects, and consequently exposed to frequent conspiracies, which, in their punishment, gave fresh display to his sanguinary disposition.

While the Eastern empire thus groaned under a vicious prince, a new race of barbarians came down from the North in a resistless torrent, which affected almost every quarter of Europe. These were the Huns, a race of Tartars or Siberians—unknown till then by the European nations; though they had long before that period been the terror of the Chinese, who are supposed to have built their famous wall to defend themselves from their invasions.

The occasion of this irruption into Europe appears to have been a civil war among themselves, in which the vanquished party were driven to the South. The Goths, a comparatively civilized people, looked upon the Huns as monsters; they fled before them. The Visigoths, who were first attacked, entreated the Romans to receive them into their dominions. Valens, who was no politician, was flattered by their request, and immediately granted them a settlement in Thrace. The Ostrogoths next appeared, and demanded the same protection. Valens now began to fear the consequences of harboring such a multitude of strangers, and he refused their demand; but the frontiers of the empire being ill defended, the Ostrogoths, disregarding his refusal, pressed forward without opposition, and overpowered Thrace like a deluge. Valens hastily concluded a peace with Sapor, the Persian, to march to the defence of that province; but he had discharged the greatest part of the old troops, trusting that these very invaders would be the defence of the empire. His army was raw and undisciplined; Fritigern, king of the Goths, cut them to pieces in the battle of Adrianople, and Valens himself perished in the engagement. These northern strangers were now unresisted. They ravaged Achaia and Pannonia; the considerable towns alone holding out against them, and these only because they knew not the art of besieging.

Gratian, in this critical juncture, arriving at Constantinople, assumed Theodosius, an able general, for his colleague in the empire, who was, in every sense, worthy of his dignity. To great courage and magnanimity Theodosius joined an honorable and virtuous disposition; though, as a Christian emperor, his character has, of course, been aspersed by Pagan historians. He enacted many excellent laws. His religious zeal perhaps transported him too far; certainly some of the laws which he framed against heretics are rigorous in the extreme. Gratian, his colleague, was

equally zealous, and yet more imprudent. He provoked the Pagans by persecution and the destruction of their temples, so that he became, from that cause alone, an object of hatred to the greatest part of his subjects.

Upon the death of Gratian, his infant son, Valentinian II., succeeded to the Western empire, which was, in the meantime, governed by Theodosius as his guardian. This prince, who obtained and who deserved the epithet of *great*, ruled the empire for eighteen years with consummate ability. He was at first obliged to yield the government of Britain and the Gauls to the prefect of Maximus, who had obtained the absolute command of the troops in those provinces, and confident of his powers, had demanded a share of the empire. This concession emboldened Maximus to aim at the sovereignty of the whole. He invaded Italy, and took possession of Rome, while the young Valentinian, with his mother Justina, fled for refuge to Thessalonica. But Theodosius marching against the usurper, defeated him in a decisive engagement in Pannonia, and allowed him to be massacred by the victorious troops. Valentinian was thus restored to the sovereignty of the West by the arms of his guardian. But the young prince soon after fell a sacrifice to the treason of one of his generals, Arbogastes; and Theodosius, defeating Arbogastes, remained sole emperor of the East and West.

The character of this prince was worthy of the best ages of the Roman state. The wisdom of the laws of Theodosius procured him the esteem and affection of his subjects; the success of his arms kept in terror the surrounding barbarians. His domestic character was amiable and respectable, though sullied at times by an intemperance of passion which led him into some acts of inhumanity, for which, in his cool moments, he suffered the keenest remorse. Under a series of princes like Theodosius, the Roman empire might have once more regained its ancient dignity and splendor; but the weakness of its successors blasted all those pleasing expectations.

The reign of Theodosius was the era of the downfall of the Pagan religion in the Roman empire, and the full *establishment of Christianity*. As this great revolution in human affairs is of the utmost importance, in far more than a mere political point of view, we shall consider it at some length in the succeeding chapter.

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